

[*]TIM WALBERG: The committee will please come to order. A quorum is present. The committee meets today pursuant to notice. Without objection, the chair may recess the committee at any point. But before we move any further, I'd like to give a warm welcome to Representative Yassamin Ansari. I hope I've pronounced that accurately.

I will learn. I will learn. Welcome to the committee. Ranking Member Scott, you're recognized to welcome Representative Ansari at this time.

BOBBY SCOTT: Let me check the pronunciation. Ansari?

YASSAMIN ANSARI: Close, Ansari.

BOBBY SCOTT: Ansari, ok.

YASSAMIN ANSARI: Thank you.

BOBBY SCOTT: We welcome her to the committee. She's replacing Mr. Grijalva. She has -- brings a fresh and diverse perspective to our work. Her leadership as vice mayor of Phoenix and freshman class president in this Congress will be a tremendous asset for this committee. And I look forward to working with her and welcoming her to the committee.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I yield back.

TIM WALBERG: I thank the gentleman. Without objection, Representative Ansari will be added to the Subcommittee on Higher Education and Workforce Development and the Subcommittee on Early Childhood, Elementary, and Secondary Education. I'd like to recognize Representative Ansari for one minute to make a brief statement as you embark on this fabulous committee.

YASSAMIN ANSARI: Thank you so much, Chair Wahlberg and Ranking Member Scott. It's an honor to be appointed to this committee, especially as a freshman member. I know I have very huge shoes to fill. Congressman Raul Grijalva was a titan in the fight for strong public schools and labor protections. Our home state of Arizona has been ranked as one of the worst schools for public education for years.

That is a direct result of extreme cuts to public education funding, resulting in some of the lowest teacher pay in the entire United States. We are also a right to work state, where the legislature has continuously gone after worker's rights and preempted cities from establishing heat safety rules in the hottest state in the country.

I'm so grateful that Arizona will continue to have representation on this committee, and I'm really proud to fill that role. I look forward to working with each of you to make our public schools stronger and our workplaces safer. Thank you.

TIM WALBERG: Thank you. And again, welcome to this committee. Now we'll turn to the oversight hearing portion of today's meeting. Good morning. It's a pleasure to welcome Secretary Linda McMahon for the first time to the Committee on Education and Workforce. We don't want to be your last necessarily. Madam Secretary, thank you for being here.

Since you were sworn in on March 3rd, you've made it your mission to address the glaring problems you inherited from your predecessor and begin to process -- the process of rightsizing the Department of Education so we can return education to the states. I want to address each of these core parts of your mission in turn.

First, the glaring problem at the K-12 level; less than one-third of the eighth graders in America can read or do math at grade level. To put that into perspective, if the nation's report card were an actual report card, a 100 percent improvement on the next iteration of the test would still leave us with a failing grade.

Unfortunately, too many in our education system are more invested in protecting their monopoly power over kids' futures or indoctrinating students into left wing ideology than teaching them basic skills, developing their critical thinking and expanding their educational choices. At the post-secondary level, your predecessor used billions of taxpayer funds to pursue illegal student loan schemes meant to shift responsibility for student loan debt from the individuals who took it on to taxpayers who paid off their debt or never went to college in the first place.

In -- in the -- in addition, the Biden-Harris administration ignored the Congressional mandate for student loan repayments to resume, breaking the student loan system and creating chaos for borrowers. All the while, Democrats have been happy to let the post-secondary education industry continue bilking students, their families and taxpayers, while in many cases delivering a product that leaves students worse off than if they had never attended college at all.

At all levels of education, your predecessor weaponized the Office for Civil Rights to inflict dangerous and radical ideologies on students and their families while simultaneously taking a hands-off approach to the exploding crisis of anti-Semitism in our nation's schools and colleges. I have been heartened to see your aggressive actions to protect the dignity, the safety and academic and athletic opportunities of women and girls from a radical gender ideology that ignores basic biology.

I've also been heartened by your desire to bring to light discriminatory DEI practices in our schools that dehumanize people. And I've been especially happy to see your department's response to -- the indifference too many education leaders continue to show in the face of ongoing threats to Jewish students.

Second, I applaud you for embracing a final mission for the Department of Education. I imagine we'll have a vigorous debate about this today, because the Republican and Democrat parties have competing visions of education in this country, and that's how it is. There's an implication in the criticism leveled at you, Madam Secretary, that the status quo is fine.

Really, the implication is that the status quo is more than fine. The minority wants us to believe that the Department of Education is overseeing an education system in which students are thriving and employers have access to a workforce prepared to succeed. Neither of these are true. As I mentioned earlier, our K-12 education performance is abysmal.

At the post-secondary level, the national six year graduation rate is just over 60 percent. In other words, our colleges and universities would get an F on their primary responsibility, and the college for all mentality driven by the previous administration's student loan schemes has only made the problem worse.

Our education system has failed to prepare a workforce with the skills employers need. Again, this is what Democrats are defending. Republicans believe there's a better way. We believe in reducing bureaucracy, trusting our educators, trusting our state and local leaders, and trusting the innovators who are pushing against the barriers thrown up by the bureaucracy.

And above all, we trust our parents. This is our vision. And thankfully, we finally have an administration in place that shares this vision. The Trump administration is eliminating bureaucracy where it isn't needed. It is

also implementing federal guardrails when needed, like enforcing Title IX to protect the rights of women and girls, protecting access to education for students with disabilities, holding colleges and universities accountable for tolerating mass harassment of Jewish students, or preventing efforts to exclude parents from their children's education.

In these ways, the Trump administration is streamlining bureaucracy so that the federal government can better deliver on the responsibilities it has. Madam Secretary, again, thank you for being here. I look forward to hearing more about your plans to continue cleaning up the mess you inherited and your vision for an education system that puts students, not bureaucrats, first.

I will now yield to the ranking member, Representative Scott, for his opening statement.

BOBBY SCOTT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and good morning. I want to thank Secretary McMahon for joining us today to discuss the department's priorities and the effect this budget will have on students, teachers and families. Secretary McMahon, as secretary of education, you took an oath to oversee the Department of Education and uphold the Constitution.

One of the missions of the Department of Education is to "strengthen the federal commitment to ensuring access to equal educational opportunities for every individual." I take no pleasure in pointing out that, in the months since this administration has taken office, you have been sworn in as the department's secretary, the actions taken by you, the unaccountable -- the unaccountable DOGE, and this administration generally have contradicted this mission.

Some of the things that have happened, nearly 50 percent of the department's workforce have been proposed to be fired, eliminating key roles that keep our nation's schools running and our students safe. Universities have been stripped of necessary grant funding, undermining the integrity of higher education.

Support for student loan borrowers has been reduced, and the key consumer protections have been threatened. And the Department of Education is being dismantled through the elimination of programs and offices without Congressional approval. Thankfully, on May 22nd, a federal judge issued a preliminary injunction and ordered the department to reinstate the previously terminated employees.

And during today's hearing -- hearing, I expect you to share with us specifically what steps you are taking to comply with that court order. Relatedly, we understand the department has repeatedly delayed and denied the department's Office of Inspector General access to requested documents, information and staff to conduct a review related to the department's recent workforce program and operational changes.

Yesterday I sent you a letter urging you to cooperate with the OIG in accordance with the law. And it's my hope that, because you have spoken to numerous news organizations about your plans to dismantle the department, you will feel comfortable with sharing your plans with Congress and the OIG. For millions of Americans who are -- that we -- are struggling to understand how the actions you have taken at the department to address learning gaps and improve academic outcomes for the nation's children.

Simply put, if all of these positions are being vacated and resources are being cut for the sake of efficiency, then who is doing the work to ensure that the mission of the department to strengthen the federal commitment to ensuring access to equal educational opportunity for every individual is being met?

For example, another mission of the department is to promote improvements in the quality and usefulness of education through federally supported research, evaluation and sharing of information, yet this administration has stopped the Institute of Educational Sciences from -- from funding. And it just -- that organization supports research and collects data on education across the country to improve student's academic outcome.

Congress uses this research to determine how it can save money and ensure resources are allocated only to effective programs. However, since you have halted research in the middle of their project -- in the middle of their projects, much of their work is now useless to Congress, and that is the very definition of creating waste.

Also, the department has abdicated its responsibility to ensure that all students are afforded safe, quality, and equitable education regardless of their race, gender, immigration status, socioeconomic status, and disability status. Under your stewardship, the Office of Civil Rights is implementing a radical reinterpretation of our civil rights laws that abandons its longstanding duties to investigate, monitor and provide resources to victims of potential civil rights violations.

As a result, students and parents with open civil rights cases are now left with no recourse and no insight as to the status of their cases. We've seen valuable programs, such as Teacher Quality Partnership, Supporting Effective Educator Development and mental health grants, which have -- supported through the Bipartisan Safer Communities Act canceled with no notice to states and no recourse to help support our nation's public schools.

Furthermore, states are being denied reimbursement for COVID-19 related expenditures that the Department of Education has promised -- had promised to pay. As -- this is in addition to the proposals the department's fiscal year 2026 budget to eliminate programs like GEAR UP and TRIO, which provide support for low income students and students with disabilities to obtain high school diplomas and prepare them for post-secondary education.

There's also the matter of many red states calling for education block grants, a regressive and illegal proposal that would make it virtually impossible for the federal government to hold states accountable for providing all students with a high quality education free from discrimination. And yet, the department's budget proposal requests -- requests that Congress grant you the legal authority to block grant several programs, a clear acknowledgment that you currently lack this authority.

So, we expect to hear from you today that you will deny the state's request to block grant without direct Congressional authority and, more importantly, we want to hear expressly how you will hold states accountable for upholding students civil rights. I'd be remiss if I did not note that the fiscal -- that the department's fiscal year -- year 2026 budget proposal would make it more difficult for students to enroll in

and afford a college education by -- by proposing reductions in funding to need base -- need-based grants such as Pell and work study.

This is achieved by removing staff who oversee federal student aid administration and oversight, forcing borrowers into unaffordable repayment plans and aggressively garnishing wages of low income borrowers. Additionally, the budget proposes reducing the department's workforce development programs by 33 percent.

[*]BOBBY SCOTT: In sum, between the cuts to higher education and programs for alternative career paths, this budget proposal would leave this country's workforce behind rather than competing in the global economy. At the end of the day, it is the students of this nation who will suffer under this budget proposal. Students from low income families and students with disabilities, English learners, international students and students of color will face more hurdles accessing equal educational opportunity, and eliminating -- eliminating those burdens is a very mission of the Department of Education.

So, regrettably, instead of investing in our children, your budget proposal would eviscerate vital evidence-based educational programs, and the office of the department -- offices of the department as a means of attack of programs -- as a means to attack programs promoting diversity, equity, inclusion and accessibility.

So, your success in this job will come only if you adhere to the mission of the Department of Education, faithfully execute the laws, and uphold your oath to the Constitution. Regrettably, this proposed budget does not signal a path of success for America's students and families, and that's why I'm urging you to reverse course and call on my colleagues on the other side of the aisle to critically review this proposal and reject it. Democrats will not sit idly by while students are under attack.

We will fight any and all attempts to dismantle the department, and we will continue to stand up for students, parents and families who are struggling. So, Madam Secretary, thank you for appearing today. We hope to get concrete and substantive answers from you. And with that, Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

TIM WALBERG: I thank the gentleman. Pursuant to Committee Rule 8(c), all members who wish to insert written statements into the record may do so by submitting them to the committee clerk electronically in Microsoft Word format by 5:00 pm, 14 days after this hearing. And without objection, the hearing record will remain open for 14 days to allow such statements and other extraneous material noted during the hearing to be submitted for the official hearing record.

I'll now turn to the introduction of today's witness, the Honorable Linda McMahon, secretary of the US Department of Education. Madam Secretary, we thank you for being here today. As you are aware, it's your responsibility to provide accurate information to the committee. Pursuant to committee rule, I would ask that you submit your oral presentation to a five minute summary of your written statement.

Madam Secretary, you are recognized for your testimony. Welcome. Make sure the microphone is on.

LINDA MCMAHON: That helps for you to hear me, right? Good morning, Chairman Walberg, Ranking Member Scott, and distinguished members of the committee. Thank you for having me today to represent the goal I share with my boss, President Trump, to responsibly eliminate federal bureaucracy, cut waste and give education back to states, parents and educators.

With your partnership, the fiscal year '26 budget will take a significant step toward that goal. We seek to shrink federal bureaucracy, save taxpayer money and empower states, who best know their local needs, to manage their education in this country. We have reviewed our programs and identified spending that does not fulfill the mandate of trust the American people have placed in President Trump.

We have cut old contracts that were enriching private parties at taxpayer expense, suspended grants for illegal DEI programs, and now we're putting forward a responsible budget request that reduces the department funding by more than 15 percent. At the same time, we're working to make American education great again.

In our conversation with governors, teachers and parents across the country, we hear calls for accountability and more local control. That's our goal, to give parents access to the quality education their kids deserve, to fix the broken higher education industry that has misled students into degrees that don't pay off, and to create safe learning environments.

We're holding institutions to account when they facilitate discriminatory or hostile environments on campus. A level playing field with limitless opportunity I think is a vision that we all can share. Our budget reflects this vision. It cuts reflect the bureaucracy that is getting out of the way, and its continuations and increases represent smart spending that will help improve student achievement, not serve bureaucratic interests.

Our goal is clear. Make education better, fairer and more accountable by ending federal overreach and empowering families, schools and states, who best know the needs of their students. I'm eager to partner with you to make this vision of the future a reality and ensure that every child is part of it. Thank you, and I look forward to your questions.

TIM WALBERG: Thank you, Madam Secretary. Under Committee Rule 9, we will now question Secretary McMahon under the five minute rule, and I'll recognize myself for five minutes. Last month, Madam Secretary, the House passed HR1, the One Big, Beautiful Bill Act, which will permanently extend President Trump's tax cuts, provide relief for hardworking families and jumpstart our economy.

Importantly, as a result of the hard work of this committee, the bill also represents the largest reform to how we fund higher education in decades. With this bill now in the Senate, what does the administration see as the three most important higher education policies included in this legislation?

LINDA MCMAHON: Well, I think one of the things that we really need to look at under HR1 is I don't think it's out of the question that we should expect our colleges and -- and universities to have a little skin in the game relative to the loans that are made. When these colleges and universities set their fees of attendance, etc, and loans are gotten relative to that, those students who are applying for those loans are expecting to get a return on that investment, and those parents who are backing that.

Now, if the degrees that these students get or if they drop out of school or if the performance is -- performance isn't as expected, then these loans remain unpaid and they become the burden of all of taxpayers. It's not that loans are forgiven or they go away, they're just shouldered by others. And I believe that if colleges and universities have a little skin in the game and they have to repay part of that loan, they'll take a look at what their costs are, as we are as -- looking at education across the board.

I think we also ought to look at our simplification of the student loan and repayment program system to discourage institutions from raising tuition costs just because they know the federal government will make the loan. That's -- and that's, I think, a little bit as to what I said in the first part of having some skin in the game.

And then we need some bold reforms like Workforce Pell, that will allow students to access Pell Grants to pursue high quality, short term training. As you mentioned, I think, in your opening remarks, Mr. Chairman, we talked about our workforce shortage. We have eight million openings, and we are not training our skilled workforce to fulfill these openings.

TIM WALBERG: Yeah, key points of our bill. Secretary McMahon, since the heinous attack on Israel on October 7th, anti-Semitism has raised its horrific head all across this country, and especially on many of our prestigious college campuses and others. They continue, sadly, to this very day. The past administration had a lot of resolutions put forward, but toothless efforts to inhibit those type of things taking place under the guise of First Amendment liberties and free speech, which -- which they weren't. Thankfully, your approach has been completely different since you took office.

Can you talk about your department's strategy for holding colleges accountable for their unwillingness to tackle anti-Semitism on their campuses?

LINDA MCMAHON: One of President Trump's campaign promises was that he was not going to tolerate anti-Semitism attacks on college campuses and universities, and he's clearly fulfilling that promise. We first took a look at Columbia University because they'd been covered very thoroughly by the media. I mean, when you see students barricaded in a library or -- and other students on the outside pounding on glass walls yelling death to Israel, death to USA, we know that that's not a safe environment for students.

I've spoken to Jewish students who have attended some of our elite universities that do allow these anti-Semitic attacks. I've been told that they are afraid, and we -- we can't allow students on campuses. So, we've -- we've held back funding from Columbia. We've also done the same thing with Harvard. But these are Title VI violations.

These are not First Amendment violations. We have gone after this under Title VI. We've withheld funding, and we are asking, as Columbia has done, to come to the table for negotiations. We've also asked Harvard. Their answer was a lawsuit. So, we are -- we are approaching and investigating probably about 60 other universities for civil rights violations.

TIM WALBERG: Thank you. In the few seconds remaining, what excites you most about returning education power and authority to the states?

LINDA MCMAHON: I believe that the best education is that closest to the child, as does the president. Those on the ground working with children every day, governors, superintendents, teachers, those are the ones who can make the best decisions for education for our children.

TIM WALBERG: Thank you. I yield back. I now recognize the gentleman from Connecticut, Mr. Courtney.

JOE COURTNEY: Great. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Secretary McMahon, in your opening remarks, you focused on the need for giving parents and families the choice in terms of their children's education. And sure enough, in your skinny budget, the line item for charter schools was plussed up, which I guess is consistent with those remarks.

However, you zeroed out magnet schools in the skinny budget. We both come from Connecticut. US News and World Report did their annual ranking of high schools in the state of Connecticut. The number one high school in the state of Connecticut is a magnet school in East Hartford, the Connecticut IB Academy.

The number three high school in terms of quality in the state of Connecticut is the Marine Science Magnet School in Groton, Connecticut, which I have the honor of representing. There is not a charter school in the top 50. And again, this is not -- my question is not really about whether charter schools perform or don't perform.

But what your budget does is it undercuts parental choice because magnet schools are choice driven programs. I can say that personally, because my daughter attended a magnet school. And, you know, it was an excellent education experience. You zeroed out that account, which just completely undercuts and contradicts the hype in your -- in your opening statement about supporting parental choice.

I mean, why -- why wouldn't you support magnet schools?

LINDA MCMAHON: I do support magnet schools. And as we both know in Connecticut -- I'll speak to magnet schools, but also in Connecticut there has been the lowest growth in charter schools. I think we're like fifth from the bottom in the country for allowing more charter school growth.

JOE COURTNEY: Why zero out magnets?

LINDA MCMAHON: Magnet schools are also -- as are charter schools, they are public schools. So, in the public schools funding, then I think that, as the states have more control over their state budgets, they can allocate those dollars to magnet schools. I think magnet schools are great. And I know that a lot of them do focus on particular kinds of studies.

JOE COURTNEY: Well, thank you. I'd just reclaim my -- talk is cheap. Budgets are what count.

LINDA MCMAHON: And you --

JOE COURTNEY: And this budget does not say that magnet schools are great.

LINDA MCMAHON: You referenced the --

JOE COURTNEY: I have another question. I want to just move on.

LINDA MCMAHON: You referenced the skinny budget, and that was an operating plan. We now have the full budget. So, we might take another look at that.

JOE COURTNEY: Yeah, it says zero.

LINDA MCMAHON: You may still be --

JOE COURTNEY: Anyway, just --

LINDA MCMAHON: Correct, but I will be happy to get back to you.

JOE COURTNEY: I want to move on to -- I want to move on to the Perkins program, which, again, is very important in the state of Connecticut. I was at a graduation ceremony on Wednesday in Groton, where 170 high schoolers were given job offers by Electric Boat Shipyard because of Perkins Grants funded programs both in tech schools and comprehensive high schools in welding, metal trades.

The hype, again, from this administration is that they're going to support trades schools. But looking at your budget, again, it's a zero increase in the Perkins line item, which I guess is -- could have been worse. You could have cut it in terms of the program. But in terms of meeting the moment of job openings, which you mentioned in your opening remarks, and certainly they're -- we have huge job openings in southeastern Connecticut.

This budget does not match the rhetoric in terms of trade schools or the trades. What I want to ask you is that, you know, we're trying to figure out in terms of just the interaction between job training programs at the Department of Labor and Perkins grant program, and can you tell me again whether or not it is your intention to move the Office of Career Technical and Adult Education to the Department of Labor?

LINDA MCMAHON: Well, thank you for that question, Representative. I can tell you that one of the executive orders from the president was that the Commerce Department, Department of Labor, and Department of Education should coordinate and look at workforce programs. There are over 50 -- 43 different workforce development programs across all of the agencies.

It's certainly inefficient in operation. So, I have had many discussions with commerce. I've had many discussions with the secretary of labor, and I think there are opportunities to move some of those programs -
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JOE COURTNEY: Well, in your discussions --

LINDA MCMAHON: To the other agencies.

JOE COURTNEY: I would hope you would note the fact that it's in statute that that office is in the Department of Education. Perkins was enacted after the Department of Education was created. It is housed in -- in the Department of Education, and we are going to be watching very closely in terms of whether or not there's a move made that violates that law.

I also would just note in closing, the adult education line item was zeroed out, which is just stunning. I mean, this is a program that allows adult learners to get a second chance in life because -- some people who didn't complete high school on time, and also immigrants who, again, want to get the literacy skills so that they can get naturalized as citizens.

I'm speaking at an adult -- I was invited to speak at an adult education graduation ceremony in Vernon Friday night. And again, it's pretty sad to be able to bring news from Washington that the -- that the secretary of education doesn't support adult education. With that, I yield back.

TIM WALBERG: I thank the gentleman. I now recognize the chairman emeritus, the gentlelady from North Carolina, Ms. Foxx.

VIRGINIA FOXX: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. And thank you, Madam Secretary, for being here and being willing to take on the challenges that you are taking on with the department. Madam Secretary, Parent PLUS loans were created by Congress in 1980 to help middle and upper income families access additional funds they might need to make tuition payments for their undergraduate children.

It was never intended to be the predominant source of funding for college. But since the limits on how much could be borrowed were eliminated in the early 1990s, the program has turned into the funding of first resort for too many American families, including those who have no ability to repay the large loan amounts that the government makes available.

Indeed, the former president and CEO of the Thurgood Marshall College Fund called the program a ticking time bomb. Politico called it the government's predatory lending program, and the Georgetown Law Center on Poverty and Equality said the program imposes serious risks, including crushing unrepayable debt.

And for black families in particular, Parent PLUS loans too often have the ability to be debilitating, as noted by a senior vice president, United Negro College Fund. Recognizing this, the Student Success and Taxpayer Protection Plan, which was included in the One Big, Beautiful Bill and is awaiting action in the Senate, established a lifetime cap of \$50,000 to protect families from overborrowing under the Parent PLUS program and coupled this with additional borrowing flexibility through lower interest Stafford loans.

What's the administration's view of the need to put limits on how much parents can borrow under the federal loan programs like Parent PLUS program?

LINDA MCMAHON: Well, we certainly do support, you know, the -- the limitations, because I think what we've seen -- I mean, you -- you know better than anyone, Congresswoman, that \$1.7 trillion in student loan debt is unacceptable and unsustainable in our country. And when colleges and universities can absolutely set the limit on loans of attendance and the government will loan that amount, that is just leading to more and more debt.

And we have to put some caps. We have to put things in place, and I applaud all the many efforts that you have take -- undertaken to reduce the cost of college.

VIRGINIA FOXX: Thank you very much. Madam Secretary, each year the federal government provides over 100 billion in grants and loans through the federal financial aid programs without any accountability as to whether these dollars leave students better off. Indeed, studies show that one-third of students are enrolled in programs that have a negative return on investment, meaning those programs leave students financially worse off than if they had never enrolled in college in the first place.

In your view, is it necessary that Congress address the lack of accountability in post-secondary education?

LINDA MCMAHON: Yes. You know, I -- I do think -- and as I mentioned a little earlier, I do think that -- that colleges and universities should have some skin in the game for programs that they are offering that can't possibly be repaid. But one of the things I think it is really important, if I may, is to say that I believe that there should be more education for parents and students in advance of borrowing.

One of the things that we are undertaking, it's not in place yet but we are looking at it, is in the FAFSA application, of having information that says, if you were borrowing this much money and you want to attend X University, this is the amount of money that you might could earn with having this degree.

So, take a look at universities across the country and what the mean amount is to take that course. Is this the university you want to go to, or would you go to another one, because now you can see exactly what kind of jeopardy, if you will, or what kind of debt you're going to owe and be able to repay. And I think that's really important.

VIRGINIA FOXX: I agree completely with you. Madam Secretary, one more question. Universities are increasingly concerned with creating cultures of inclusion and belonging. But in recent years, we've seen these institutions turn the other way when Jewish students are excluded or subjected to litmus tests about Israel and Zionism.

In your opinion, what message does it send to Jewish and Israeli students and faculty on college campuses when universities entertain calls to boycott and divest -- and divest from Israel? And what is the Department of Education doing to rein in the damage that BDS causes in higher education?

LINDA MCMAHON: Well, we've certainly taken our universities to task already through the programs with Columbia that you've seen of reducing or of stopping their funding, \$400 million. And right now, other departments or agencies, HHS, GSA involved, we've cut Harvard's funding by \$2.2 billion, an additional 450 million I think is the correct number.

We're putting teeth behind these Title VI violations. Before, I think -- I think it was Representative Scott that said maybe that talk is cheap. Well, we've put -- we've put teeth in these efforts.

VIRGINIA FOXX: Thank you, Madam Secretary. And thank you, Mr. Chairman. I yield back.

TIM WALBERG: I thank the gentlelady. I now recognize the gentlelady from Oregon, Ms. Bonamici.

SUZANNE BONAMICI: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Secretary McMahon, on February 13th during your confirmation hearing, Senator Murray asked you, if confirmed, do you commit to getting every dollar we have

invested in our students and our schools out to them? And you replied, well, the appropriated dollars and those monies that are passed by Congress, yes.

And Senator Alsobrooks asked you whether you would support any directive from the president to freeze funds that have been appropriated by Congress, and you responded, if they have been appropriated by Congress, those funds should be disseminated. Yet you stood by as Elon Musk's Department of Government Efficiency froze or terminated more than \$1 billion in Congressionally directed federal grants at the Department of Education, and you've made no attempts to reinstate those funds.

So, Secretary McMahon, were you not being truthful when you testified in the Senate? And if you were being truthful, what is your plan to immediately reinstate these funds?

LINDA MCMAHON: Well, I thank you for that question. And I would like to perhaps explore with you a little further as to exactly which grants you are talking about. I believe that --

SUZANNE BONAMICI: The \$1 billion in Congressionally directed federal grants that have been cut.

LINDA MCMAHON: And as I said, I would like to work with you and to understand exactly which cuts -- which grants you're talking about. I can also tell you, that as part of my testimony, I've -- I have always --

SUZANNE BONAMICI: Madam Secretary, I'm reclaiming my time, because the question is Congressionally directed funds have been cut. What are you doing to reinstate those funds?

LINDA MCMAHON: And I also said in that testimony that we would abide by the law, and that's exactly what we will do.

SUZANNE BONAMICI: Well, that would be to reinstate the funds. And I know you have this so-called simplified funding program that consolidates programs for -- including Title IV-A, which I always lead the appropriations letter for. But overall, this consolidation -- so-called consolidation leads to a \$4.5 billion cut. So, that makes your statement untruthful if you're not doing anything to restore those funds.

With regard to Title IV-A, can you name one of the major categories in Title IV-A where -- where cuts will lead to a well-rounded education -- or world class education, as you state?

LINDA MCMAHON: Well, let me -- let me respond to one other thing that you asked before. And when you were talking about the cuts of \$4.5 billion, along with that cut goes a great reduction in the cost of regulatory compliance. But we have --

SUZANNE BONAMICI: But, Madam Secretary --

LINDA MCMAHON: We have --

SUZANNE BONAMICI: I need to reclaim my time because I want you to answer the question about which category in IV-A --

LINDA MCMAHON: Well, I'm --

SUZANNE BONAMICI: We're cutting will lead to a world class education.

LINDA MCMAHON: Well, I'm certainly going to answer your question. But also, I think it's important for this committee and for taxpayers to understand that, when we cut red tape for regulations, there's --

SUZANNE BONAMICI: I understand. Madam Secretary, I have to reclaim my time because you're not answering my question.

LINDA MCMAHON: Well, I'm trying to answer your question.

SUZANNE BONAMICI: The cuts have happened. And as secretary of education, your job is to faithfully execute the law.

LINDA MCMAHON: Correct.

SUZANNE BONAMICI: If you can't do that, you shouldn't be in this job. I have another question for you. Since you've been in office, you've violated or stated your intention to violate several major federal laws that have been enacted by Congress. And one of them I want to talk about is the Education Sciences Reform Act, so that's what I'll focus on. Congress enacted the law more than 20 years ago and created the Institute of Education Sciences.

IES provides evidence-based data to improve student outcomes and support teachers, but the Trump administration -- administration unilaterally canceled more than \$900 million in IES grant funding and reduced IES staff from 175 to fewer than 20 employees, a reduction of about 90 percent. So, Secretary McMahon, what statute authorizes you to unilaterally dismantle an office Congress created?

LINDA MCMAHON: What we have done to -- to the benefit of those grants is to -- well, first of all, let me say that there are a lot of contracts that are done in IES. So, none of those contracted services have been affected. And also, what -- what is part of IES, the funding you're talking about, are for NAEP. And the NAEP program is already in place for the next five years.

However, we did renegotiate that contract and save \$540 billion, I think -- or million dollars.

SUZANNE BONAMICI: And you can do that with fewer than 20 employees, is what you're saying?

LINDA MCMAHON: We are doing it because -- we are able to continue doing what we do because the contracted services, which are still in place, have not been affected.

SUZANNE BONAMICI: It's -- it's hard to believe that you can meet the statutory obligations without money or adequate staff. What do the NAEP scores show when disaggregated by income, by the way?

LINDA MCMAHON: I beg your pardon?

SUZANNE BONAMICI: What does the NAEP scores show when disaggregated by income?

LINDA MCMAHON: When disaggregate -- I don't understand your question.

SUZANNE BONAMICI: By income. Ok. Well, maybe you should look at the NAEP scores, because what they say you -- you and the chairman and a lot of members of this committee use the NAEP scores to talk about how education is doing. What we really need to look at is how we address --

LINDA MCMAHON: Are you talking about --

SUZANNE BONAMICI: Low income students.

LINDA MCMAHON: Oh, ok. You're talking about performance and achievement gaps. Ok, I get it now.

SUZANNE BONAMICI: Yes.

LINDA MCMAHON: Ok. Well, NAEP scores, I think, continually show what we all know to be true, I think. I've looked at it in my state of Connecticut. It's one of the things that first got me into government. I looked at the achievement gaps, and that's what I wanted to make sure that we were servicing.

SUZANNE BONAMICI: And as my time expires, Madam Secretary, what they show is that we need to have investments to help our low income students succeed, and you are cutting those investments. And I -- I ran for Congress because I wanted to make public education better but not just for a few, not just those who are worthy of private dollars and not just those in wealthy neighborhoods, but every single student.

As secretary of education, I hope you would have the same goal. I yield back.

LINDA MCMAHON: I do. And thank you.

TIM WALBERG: The gentlelady's time has expired. I now recognize the gentleman from South Carolina, Mr. Wilson.

JOE WILSON: Thank you very much, Chairman Tim Walberg, for your great leadership on behalf of the American people. And gosh, thank you, Madam Secretary, for your vision and courage to promote local school control of education for parents, for students, for teachers. And Washington is not all-wise, and the local elected school boards should be where power is exhibited and where people know better about the local communities, and it should be devolved to them.

Additionally, I -- I want to thank you and President Trump. You are successfully empowering American citizens, not big government, and you're actually doing the exact opposite of any dictatorship in that power is being returned to the people, the local elected school boards that so well reflect the citizens who have elected them.

And then I believe you are the right person for the job. Additionally, I believe too that it -- it's so clear that education is a state issue and it should remain as a state issue. It should not be a federal issue. And with that in mind, I recently led a letter, along with 27 of my colleagues, to call for an increase in funding for the Federal Charter Schools Program, CSP. Across the country, the charter school community is committed to providing families with high quality public education options voluntarily, choice of the parents.

And I am grateful to see that President Trump's budget would increase the charter school program by 14 percent. Furthermore, last month during National Charter Schools Week, you announced an additional \$60 million in funding for the CSP this year to help meet the needs of families across the country. The -- for the American people and particularly for the media, if you will explain what the successes of the voluntary school choice programs are, and how is this money going to be spent around the country?

LINDA MCMAHON: Well, thank you very much, Congressman Wilson, for -- for -- A, for your kind words about me. But also, I have visited many schools -- many charter schools throughout the country already. And what I have seen with those charter schools is the innovation that they are allowed to use that you don't see in a lot of our public schools.

And so, I'm very pleased to see that the president is also supporting school choice. Is -- the president wants to make sure that the best education is that that's closest to the child. Whether that's home schooling, charter schools, public schools, private schools, religious schools, he wants to make every opportunity available to all the children in the country.

So, I am pleased that we did increase the budget request for charter schools.

[*]JOE WILSON: And I -- I too have visited the schools. And I -- I visit all the district I represent every type that you just identified. And I hope the media will go by and visit a charter school and see how positive they are and find out how the students are doing so well. But -- and they're voluntary. It's what -- it may not -- it's not for everyone, but where it is the media, it would be nice for them as they're doing investigative reporting to look into truly not just a -- the -- the viewpoint of the teachers union, but what's really happening in America.

Along with that, Secretary McMahon, I'm really concerned that we have adversaries. War criminal Putin, we have the Chinese Communist Party, we have the dictatorship in Tehran, are targeting our universities and colleges. What can we done -- do again to stop this -- their inroads? And it's already been successful in removing Confucius Institutes which are a branch of the Communist Party -- Chinese Communist Party, so what more can be done to promote freedom and democracy instead of totalitarianism?

LINDA MCMAHON: Well, I think we've certainly seen -- in fact, one of the requirements we had of Harvard was that they -- or one of the questions we had of Harvard is how are they vetting their students that come internationally? How are they vetting their teachers, their professors who come in internationally? Are they -- do they have ideological backgrounds that are contrary to the United States government?

We also -- I mean I heard this morning on the news that there was a student from China, I think it was discovered in July, that had um, fungus spores in a backpack from China that he brought to the University of Michigan. Now we have to make sure that we stop that because this can be an attack on our food supply, an attack on our, you know, our total population.

So these are incredibly important things. And the State Department is looking at visas, canceling them, making sure that the students who are here are here in the best interest of the United States.

JOE WILSON: And thank you for promoting free speech and also international students who want to come and learn and be positive, but also understand that there may be agents of foreign countries coming to our country. I yield back.

TIM WALBERG: I thank the gentleman. And I recognize the gentleman and teacher from California, Mr. Takano.

MARK TAKANO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for being here, Madam Secretary. Good to see you again. Let's get right to it. Madam Secretary, do you believe that the federal government is legally or constitutionally permitted to punish a private entity for having a different viewpoint than the administration?

LINDA MCMAHON: What do you mean by that?

MARK TAKANO: Well, do you have -- does the government have the power or legally or is it legal or constitutional for you, the secretary to punish a private entity for having a different viewpoint than the administration?

LINDA MCMAHON: I don't know what you mean by punish, can you be more specific?

MARK TAKANO: Well, let's move on. Apparently, we -- I don't want to get into this, um, back and forth on this. Uh, let me say, I want -- um, this poster here, you gave an interview on CNBC on May 28th. Um, I'm going to -- and discussing the cancellation of Harvard University's federal funding grants and contracts. And you said, and I quote, "Universities should continue to be able to do research as long as they're abiding by the laws and in sync, I think, with the administration and what I think the administration is trying to accomplish." So what you're saying -- so you're saying Harvard can have its funding and its international students back if and when it teaches what the Trump administration demands.

These demands are included in this April 11th, letter signed by the Department of Education and other agencies and -- and include a requirement that the government must be able to quote-unquote "audit the viewpoints" of its student body, faculty staff to ensure, quote-unquote, "viewpoint diversity." I ask unanimous consent to submit this letter for the record.

TIM WALBERG: Without objection. It will be submitted.

MARK TAKANO: And it says I quote in the letter, "Harvard must abolish all criteria, preferences and practices through its admissions and hiring practices that function as ideological litmus tests." Now, Madam Secretary, what are the limits of this viewpoint diversity that the administration is trying to enforce? Under these demands, for example, would the Harvard government department be compelled to hire faculty that believe the 2020 election was stolen?

LINDA MCMAHON: I believe that um, there are rights to freedom of speech, but there -- and the -- on campuses and universities of colleges and universities across the country, freedom of speech should be

allowed. There should be open debate. There should be different viewpoints --

MARK TAKANO: I'm not asking you a question of freedom of speech here, Madam Secretary, I'm asking you about the -- the -- the limits of viewpoint diversity cited in this letter. You demand that Harvard should -- we be compelled to hire faculty -- I mean, what you're saying that there has to be viewpoint diversity. I'm just asking you what Harvard -- would the government department be compelled to hire faculty that believe the 2020 election was stolen as an example of viewpoint diversity?

LINDA MCMAHON: However, one of the things that Harvard Crimson and by its -- by its own --

MARK TAKANO: OK, I think you're struggle -- you don't really have an answer, so I'm going to move on to other questions. Maybe we can clarify by the other questions.

LINDA MCMAHON: Well, you're not allowing me to answer the question --

MARK TAKANO: Would viewpoint diversity mean, for example -- Madam Secretary, reclaiming my time.

LINDA MCMAHON: Don't you want to know the answer?

MARK TAKANO: Reclaiming my time, Madam Secretary.

LINDA MCMAHON: Don't you want to know what my response is?

MARK TAKANO: Reclaiming my time, Madam Secretary --

LINDA MCMAHON: OK, we you go ahead.

MARK TAKANO: [Inaudible] secretary, would the Harvard Medical School who is looking to hire an immunologist, would that person need to adhere to HHS -- HHS Secretary Kennedy's view on the efficacy of vaccines?

LINDA MCMAHON: Listen, we all know that we should have our universities look at what all the programs are --

MARK TAKANO: I don't think you really thought through this viewpoint --

LINDA MCMAHON: The political ideology -- the political ideology that you're trying to put forth is a false narrative.

MARK TAKANO: OK.

LINDA MCMAHON: And the funding is a privilege. It's not a right.

MARK TAKANO: Madam Secretary, recalling -- reclaiming my time. Does refusing to hire a Holocaust denier as a member of Harvard's history department faculty count as an ideological litmus test?

LINDA MCMAHON: I believe that there should be diversity of viewpoints relative to teachings and opinions on campuses.

MARK TAKANO: But what about -- what about this situation of Harvard's history department? And they're looking for another department member. Would being a Holocaust denier -- count as -- as that?

LINDA MCMAHON: I do know that -- I do know that Harvard did replace its head of Middle Eastern studies even before we looked at it because they believed that they needed to make changes already.

MARK TAKANO: OK -- OK. Can you explain to me how cutting funding to improve -- to -- to uh, cutting funding to cancer research, which may save the lives of children will help Jewish students on campus?

LINDA MCMAHON: Well, we had to put some teeth in the antisemitism study, so we used -- that actually didn't come from the Department of Education. They came from HHS. So therefore, Harvard had indicated that it might even --

MARK TAKANO: OK, well --

LINDA MCMAHON: Take from its endowment, which is \$53 billion some funds to continue that research. And I think that might have been a really good use for some of those funds.

MARK TAKANO: Well, I think it's pretty clear you haven't really thought through this whole viewpoint.

LINDA MCMAHON: Well, you wouldn't know because you haven't allowed me to answer my questions, but thank you.

MARK TAKANO: Well, I think you've -- you're showing that you couldn't really answer the question.

TIM WALBERG: The gentleman's time has expired.

LINDA MCMAHON: No, I --

MARK TAKANO: I -- I -- I would yield back.

TIM WALBERG: I thank the gentleman. Now I recognize the gentleman from Wisconsin, Mr. Grothman.

GLENN GROTHMAN: Yeah, first of all I'd like to comment on a statement made by -- by our newest member here. In Wisconsin, I felt one of the things we did to improve education the most is stand up to the teachers union and allow some of the worst teachers to be let go. And I think it's disappointing we have people who think the key to improving education is unionizing the schools.

And unionizing the schools inevitably means you can't get rid of the worst teachers. So just a little bit my personal experience in Wisconsin. Second thing, people hear mention the GED. And at least in Wisconsin, we weren't allowed, even as a state legislator to see the GED. But somebody released it to me anyway, I guess breaking the law.

And I was shocked at how easy those tests were. It was almost comical. I'm going to ask you, will you do what you can to at least for some states, I don't know if it's a nationwide thing or a state by state thing release some of these GED exams, even if they're four or five years old, so the public can see what they mean?

LINDA MCMAHON: Well, thank you for your question. I'm not sure that's under my jurisdiction, but I would like to look into it and get back to you on that.

GLENN GROTHMAN: OK. Um, next thing, just covering workforce pell for just a second. I know it sounds good. Uh, at least in Wisconsin, uh, when I talk to trucking firms, I saw a -- I toured a manufacturer last week who was paying for the uh, tech school degrees for its employees, even before the people were employed there.

Uh, same thing with construction firms paying for the education. So I kind of felt a little bit that this workforce is we're driving in and paying for stuff the private sector is taking care of already. So I'll just ask you to look into that. Now as far as bias and the antisemitism in universities. To me, it's part of part and parcel of a larger problem.

Uh, anybody who's been involved in Republican politics for a while has met students who have to lie routinely on tests to feel they have to get a good score. And it's because you have this monolithic left wing that is got almost all in some disciplines of the teaching jobs. And it's -- and to me, this antisemitism is an increasingly part of the left wing.

It's a guise that's everywhere in the universities, global warming, greatly exaggerated amount of bias in the universities, that sort of thing. What do you think -- I honestly don't know the answer to this, what do you think we can do about the overwhelming left wing bias in so many disciplines at the universities?

LINDA MCMAHON: Well, I think that's one of the things that I've been talking about is, um, is doing some vetting on how the courses are being taught. And to make sure that we have, you know, equal and diverse viewpoints. I mean when Harvard will through its own Harvard Crimson, say that only 3 percent of the faculty are conservative.

I don't think we have diversity of viewpoints in that case. And even -- even in hiring. We're looking at Harvard -- um, well, you know, Harvard had the standard case. It was students versus Harvard.

GLENN GROTHMAN: Thank you.

LINDA MCMAHON: It was Harvard's not hiring, you know, through merit. And it's -- and it's decreasing those populations of students from uh, you know, we're -- it's -- it's against a lot of Asians in the community.

GLENN GROTHMAN: OK.

LINDA MCMAHON: So all of those things have to be taken into consideration.

GLENN GROTHMAN: I agree with you that we have a shortage of people going into skills based um, learning programs, be they tech schools, be they trade schools, what have you. I think part of the answer is to disseminate the statistics showing how much better say a plumber or an electrician or a welder does than people with a communication arts degree or a business marketing degree.

Um, and it's a very difficult thing to know what to do because of course under our Constitution education is not really something that we think of as a federal thing. But I think you could disseminate that. Would you try to do what you could to, um, during your term, educate the public as to how much better financially people do with a skill as opposed to a general education degree?

LINDA MCMAHON: Well, I certainly would like to, uh, to make sure that everyone does understand that.

GLENN GROTHMAN: Would you publicize it? I guess that's what I'm looking for. Would you publicize how much better off?

LINDA MCMAHON: I think those stats are available. All you have to do is have a plumber come to your house. Boy, I can tell you that I'm going, I might be in the wrong business.

GLENN GROTHMAN: I hope you use your position. My final question is, um, one of my colleagues here talked about um, so-called difference by income level. And I just think that's not where they should be looking. I think they should be looking by family background. Would you collect data unlike for income level family background of students and see by that I mean family structure and see how that affects educational test scores?

Would you do that for us?

LINDA MCMAHON: Well, I'd really like to get back to you and understand a little bit more of what you would like us to look into, but I will get back to you on that.

TIM WALBERG: The gentleman's time has expired. I now yield -- I recognize the gentlelady from North Carolina, Ms. Adams for her five minutes.

ALMA ADAMS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you, Secretary McMahon, for being here today. I hope that I will have an opportunity to meet with you. I've made a request, and we weren't able to do that. Uh, and hopefully you'll reconsider. But let me just raise a concern that I heard from one of my constituents who served in the Department of Grants Management Policy Division.

Their entire unit received a riff notice in March. Uh, and this -- this office from what I understand, held key oversight functions for grant administration and compliance. And ensuring that taxpayer dollars were -- were used effectively and legally. And that the department's obligations under federal statute were met.

and I know you've spoken about the importance of streamlining and efficiency. And I respect that. And I know it's difficult sometimes. But let me ask you if you can speak to the department's plan for transitioning this critical compliance work moving forward? And how you are ensuring that core responsibilities around federal grant oversight, training and legal compliance are still being fulfilled?

LINDA MCMAHON: Well, thank you very much for your question. Just let me give you the assurance that even with the streamlining that we have done so far, we have not missed any of our statutory requirements. And that's what we will continue to do.

ALMA ADAMS: So -- so -- so you have and you are going to meet those, is that what you're saying?

LINDA MCMAHON: Yes.

ALMA ADAMS: OK. So let me ask you, as you already know, Title 3, Part B provides mandatory funding to HBCUs. And -- and I appreciate your statement on HBCUs. I'm a 40 year professor HBCU, a graduate twice of one. But can you speak to how the department is using the data and metrics to track the -- the long term impact of outcomes like academic performance, research competitiveness and infrastructure modernization at our HBCUs that are approximately almost 200 years old?

And beyond that, how do you plan to scale what's working? And if we're seeing strong results at one campus, then how can we make sure that these best practices are reaching others?

LINDA MCMAHON: Well, thank you very much for asking. Um, we have held all of our funding for HBCUs level. They've not been decreased. I've met with President Vincent from Howard University and understand from him a lot of the great programs they have in place. So we recognize the great value of HBCUs. And I believe and I can give back to you to make sure that this is correct statement, but I believe that the president also has a special office in the administration for HBCUs.

ALMA ADAMS: Yes, yes, ma'am, he does. And um, and of course, he did have an executive order on HBCUs. Uh, and of course, you, you know, that HBCUs Partners Act signed into law by the president requires agencies to -- to report each year to Congress on how they're supporting HBCUs. And how that aligns with the goals of the executive order and the White House initiative which you just spoke about.

So let's say that there's a grant that gets canceled, but that -- that cancellation doesn't line up with the executive order or the intent of the HBCU Partners Act. Would you be willing to -- to work with the White House initiative and your interagency partners to take another look at those decisions and potentially be in state grants that were inconsistent with that guidance?

LINDA MCMAHON: Certainly, I would always look into those things, but we have not canceled any grants.

ALMA ADAMS: Yes, ma'am. OK, well, we're going to -- we're going to make sure that we follow up on that.

LINDA MCMAHON: Yeah, we'll -- we'll follow up if that's -- if that's not the case.

ALMA ADAMS: All right, well, thank you. Are there ways that -- that you could look at to incentivize required state matches to HBCUs as the executive order states? Because currently that's not being done.

LINDA MCMAHON: I'm not sure that it's not being done, but I would like to look into it further. And if it is not being done, I'd like to talk to you about it.

ALMA ADAMS: Yes, ma'am, I want to talk to you about it. Because I can assure you that it is not being done. But let me -- let me just say uh, Mr. Chairman, I do want to ask for unanimous consent to enter into the record a 2024 report from the Century Foundation that outlines studies that show that HBCUs provide an incredible return on investment.

TIM WALBERG: Without objection, it will be submitted.

ALMA ADAMS: Well, thank you. And -- and Madam Secretary, thank you very much. Uh, I know that I'm almost slightly over my time, but I'm looking forward to this year's HBCU week. I saw that the website has been updated. And I certainly appreciate the effort to -- to keep that momentum going. I look forward to, as I said in my opening comments to having that one on one with you.

I would certainly appreciate if you would, if you would honor that request. And thank you very much for being here. And Mr. Chair I yield back.

LINDA MCMAHON: Thank you. I will certainly do that.

TIM WALBERG: The gentlelady yields right on time. Thank you. I recognize the gentlelady from New York, Ms. Stefanik.

ELISE STEFANIK: Thank you. Mr. Chairman. Secretary McMahon, thank you for being here today. I want to follow up on my colleague across the aisles back and forth where you didn't have an opportunity to answer the question. As you know, I've been very engaged in leading this effort in terms of holding Harvard accountable.

We saw the scourge of antisemitism -- antisemitism after the Hamas attacks on October 7th. And Harvard failed in every respect to enforce the rules to protect Jewish students. And over the course of our investigation, it was revealed that there was antisemitism deep in the Office of DEI at Harvard for their failure to respond to Jewish students.

And it highlighted this issue of a failure of ideological diversity. I wanted to add some more details to what you pointed out. Less than 3 percent of the Harvard faculty are conservative. And this is a challenge in education writ large. According to the Harvard Crimson, as of 1989, the ratio was 2 to 1, liberal to conservative.

By 2017, it was 5 to 1. And then as of 2023, it's 26 to 1. So when we talk about ideological diversity, it is a crisis at Harvard. Can you further elaborate on that?

LINDA MCMAHON: Well, just agreeing with what you said. I mean, when by their own statistics, it is clear that they don't have diversity of viewpoint. And I believe and as I mentioned a little bit earlier, the fact that Harvard had already replaced its head or looking to replace its head of Middle East studies recognizing that they already had an issue.

I think it's um, it's indicative that Harvard, even before we were um, initiating our uh, well, I actually think that we spurred them on.

ELISE STEFANIK: Absolutely.

LINDA MCMAHON: When we started putting teeth in what we were doing, they finally said, OK, we're -- we're going to make some changes. And they did do that shortly after we started our investigation.

ELISE STEFANIK: And you're spot on, Secretary McMahon. Harvard has failed to save itself. They are responding to the exceptional work of this committee and the accountability measures that this administration has put into place. So I want to thank you for your strong leadership. And I want to thank President Trump for his strong leadership.

I care deeply about this. As an alumna of Harvard and as the first member of my immediate family to have that opportunity, we want to make sure these institutions are excellent for generations to come. My follow up which is on a different subject, this has come up in virtually every meeting that I've had, whether it's with university presidents, professors or students is the challenge of AI and academic integrity in the classroom.

Can you talk about the department's approach in terms of how to harness the benefits of this technology, but also make sure that we are learning the basics in the classroom and have academic integrity?

LINDA MCMAHON: You know, I think AI is probably one of the -- it's so overwhelming with the abilities that it can bring, but it also has a downside and dangers. We want to make sure that AI is not uh, you know, leading to uh, false essays or papers or studies that students are turning in. However, when I've looked at K-12 education and I've seen some of the tutorial benefits for individual studies through AI, I think it brings so much to the table that we can offer students who are accomplishing more in the classroom, who -- or who aren't accomplishing as much by that one on one tutorial advantage.

So I think we need to harness and capture those opportunities from AI. But at the same time, making sure we understand. And I don't think we even have this much of a handle on it yet of what -- of what some of the dangers of AI can be. And I think that that's what's incumbent upon us to look across the board at all of that.

ELISE STEFANIK: Well, thank you for that. And my last question and this is primarily for K-12. And I think about this both as a policymaker, but as a mom, as my young three year old who is finishing pre-K three but screen time for our kids and the dangers of huge amounts of screen time. I want to credit my colleague, Kevin Kiley, who's hosted a hearing on this next week.

Can you discuss the administration and the department's approach to tackling this very concerning issue that has had huge impacts on the mental health, but also the focus of our kids?

LINDA MCMAHON: Well, and I do think this is really at state level.

ELISE STEFANIK: Yes.

LINDA MCMAHON: And there are governors who are, you know, promoting policies or superintendents who are put in policies in their local areas that say, you know, bell to bell in schools, no devices so that students aren't distracted, you know, from what they're doing. And I think parents at home need to look at the amount of screen time that their -- their children.

This is a great deal of parental responsibility as well. And we, you know, we've looked at -- at different aspects. I've seen reports of more and more screen time, which then reduces your ability to focus and have attention for your subjects. So while there is an entertainment value and information value to screen time, it's uh, it's not always -- uh, I think less could be more.

ELISE STEFANIK: Thank you so much, Secretary McMahon, for your service, for the tremendous work you're doing for students across the country. I yield back.

LINDA MCMAHON: Thank you.

TIM WALBERG: I thank the gentlelady. And now I recognize -- that I've lost a sight here -- [Laughter] A little too soon. I now want to recognize the gentlelady from Georgia, Ms. McBath.

LUCY MCBATH: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And Secretary McMahon, thank you so much for being with us today. As secretary, you have a direct authority over the cancellation of grants and contracts at the Department of Education. On February 10th, you canceled the Charting My Path for Student Success program that served over 1,600 disabled students and their families across 62 schools in 11 states, including Paulding County, which is in my home state of Georgia.

This year round program provided support services and frequent small group sessions to ensure that physically disabled students or students with dyslexia, autism and other disabilities as well as their families can meet their goals of transitioning to and succeeding in adulthood, which is really what every parent wishes for their child.

All too often, it's unfortunately a sink or swim situation for disabled students after high school. And program -- programs like this can be the difference between a lifetime on disability insurance versus a good job that they can raise a family on. On this poster right here, you can see the exact email that was sent out to parents in Georgia because of your decision which I would like to submit digitally for the record.

It says the federal funding provided by the Department of Education for this initiative has been discontinued immediately. And that your child will no longer receive transition supports. I would like to also submit for the record an article from NPR about a young man named Logan, and his mother Jessie, who were really benefiting from this program before it was abruptly canceled.

Secretary, this is just simply a yes or no answer. Do you stand by your decision to cancel this program in the middle of the school year without any warning to the hundreds of students, teachers and families that were participating?

LINDA MCMAHON: Well, I would like to explore that more.

LUCY MCBATH: Secretary, this is a yes or no answer --

LINDA MCMAHON: No, no, it's not a yes or no answer.

LUCY MCBATH: Yes, it is.

LINDA MCMAHON: It's not.

LUCY MCBATH: And the American people deserve a full --

LINDA MCMAHON: Well, I'm not going to give you a yes or no answer because it's more --

LUCY MCBATH: Answer from you, yes or no. I'm not going to let you circumvent. I'm not going to let you ignore it. Yes or no? It's a simple question.

LINDA MCMAHON: Well, I'll have to --

LUCY MCBATH: Do you stand by this decision?

LINDA MCMAHON: Of the different programs. And I can't speak to individual grant programs without looking into them exactly. There were -- there are a lot of grant programs out there, so I'd like to get back to you.

LUCY MCBATH: Know for the record that the secretary is unwilling to answer my question. Is it clear or do you believe that you are misleading the public regarding the actions that you and President Trump have taken to cut or cancel programs and services for disabled children and their families? You have said multiple times that disabled students will not be negatively impacted by your decisions, but they already are.

Time and time again, this administration asked the American people to listen to everything that they say, but to ignore actually what they're really doing. Given our limited time, I plan to submit written questions to you and for the record to learn more about your decision and get some direct answers from these parents as to why the kids can't meet with their teachers anymore.

Secretary, yes or no, it's a simple answer, just a direct answer, do you believe that gun violence, the leading cause of death for children in this country is a public health crisis?

LINDA MCMAHON: I believe that gun violence is just -- we shouldn't -- we should take steps to make sure that gun violence does not happen in our schools.

LUCY MCBATH: But is it a public health crisis to you? The American people and families want to know, do you believe that our children sitting in our classrooms should be fear of unnecessary gun violence? Most of America believes that this is a public scourge. Do you believe that gun violence poses a threat to our children while they're sitting in our classrooms?

LINDA MCMAHON: Gun violence should not be allowed anywhere. And gun violence especially should not be in our schools.

LUCY MCBATH: I'd like to say to you, secretary, as a mother who lost her son to unnecessary gun violence in the prime of his teenage years, your response or basically a lack of response is completely out of touch. Every parent, whether they send their kids to public or private school worries about their child being killed at school.

And there's a lot of data to prove that. It is an unfortunate reality that this happens every single day. But yes, this is the reality. There's something very wrong when the highest ranking government officials responsible for the safety and education of our kids cannot claim that the leading cause of death among children is not a crisis.

Every American should be deeply concerned while you remain secretary of Education. And I hope that I'm able to get some answers in writing from you. And I yield back.

TIM WALBERG: I thank the gentlelady. And I now recognize the gentleman from Utah.

BURGESS OWENS: Thank you. Madam Secretary, good seeing you again here.

LINDA MCMAHON: Oh, thank you. [Laughter]

BURGESS OWENS: First of all, I'd like to thank you for bringing your entrepreneurial expertise to an industry that has long forgotten what a good return on investment is when it comes down to teaching our kids. There's nothing more important for the survival of American culture than what you're tasked to do. You represent the end of accepting failure as an option.

And on behalf of those who love the role of educators because they love the children they teach, I want to thank you for -- for that -- that passion.

[*]BURGESS OWENS: Uh, as you know, the House passed Resolution -- Reconciliation bill includes a version of the Education Choice for Children's Act which would provide billions in tax credit scholarships for school choice. I have long advocated for school choice and am eager to see a much-needed school choice legislation enacted into federal level.

Why do you think expanding school choice is such a huge win for parents who are desperate for educational options?

LINDA MCMAHON: Well, thank you very much, Congressman, for that question. School choice, I believe, is one of the top things we can do to make sure that every child has equal access to an excellent education. And President Trump certainly believes, and I've said this many times, even this morning, he truly believes, as do I, that the best education is that that is closest to the child.

When we think about teachers who are with our students, our children, every single day, school superintendents and parents who should have rights over the say of the curriculum that are being taught to their children, these are all things that are part of the school choice program. The president does not believe that any child should be imprisoned, if you will, in a failing school, but should have opportunities to go to other schools.

And so I'm really pleased to see that he is wanted limits or the budgets increased for our charter schools. He wants to make sure that our public schools have the best teachers, the best funding wants to make sure that

all private schools, religious schools and even those that are teaching their children at home with homeschooling, have all the best tools available.

He was embarrassed by the NAEP scores. He was embarrassed by where education levels were in our country, and he was angry. And when he's talked to me about it, he said we absolutely need to make changes so that our students can have the best education in the world and that their performance scores will indicate that.

BURGESS OWENS: By the way, we should also be angry by what's happening to our kids today. It is a travesty. And by the way, every child, no matter what zip code they live in, deserve the rights to life, liberty and pursuit of happiness and the only way that can happen is through education. You have been aggressive in attacking the scourge of DEI in our educational institutions.

This has been the root cause of anti-Semitism our children our trained to embrace. Of course, our Democratic colleagues accused of attacking free speech, whitewashing history and using DEI as a cover to launch a political crusade against institutions don't like. Could you talk more about why DEI is important and important civil rights issue for all students?

LINDA MCMAHON: Well, unfortunately, many of the programs of DEI did more -- I mean, the title was Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, and it did more, I think, to separate and to provide more segregation ideas because it pitted an oppressor versus oppressed ideology. Many students were taught that if you're White, you're privileged.

If you're not, you should not bring that privileged group as part of what you're doing. That is exactly contrary to, I think, everything we've been trying to accomplish in our country over the years so that everyone really has equal access, equal opportunity under the law.

BURGESS OWENS: Yesterday, you had a hearing with a senator out of Rhode Island who said you are surrendering by giving the power back to the parents and the districts. I just want to remind everybody that we, in 2025, have 70 percent of our kids in eighth grade cannot read write and think. In 2017, Black kids in the state of California, 75 percent could not read, write and think.

Here in Baltimore, we have zero proficiency in math for many of the schools in this district. So I think it's kind of arrogant for those bureaucrats here, politicians believe that we do it best for our kids and when the parents should be at the forefront of that. I want to thank you and this department and this administration for understanding that the power belongs to the parents.

And we're going to start producing some of the smartest, wisest and the most hopeful students in the history of mankind. So thank you for that. I appreciate it, and I yield back.

LINDA MCMAHON: Thank you, sir.

TIM WALBERG: I thank the gentleman. I recognize gentlelady from Pennsylvania, Ms. Lee.

SUMMER LEE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think that in very many ways we've been talking around a lot of the issues with this administration. So to be honest and to be very clear, I want to say that this administration has undoubtedly revived the culture of racism. We haven't seen since the Jim Crow era. They've made it clear that open attacks on Black and Brown and other marginalized communities is not just tolerated, but it's encouraged.

So when they call for removing of equity and inclusion and diversity and accessibility from schools in favor of quote, unquote, traditional American values, it's indistinguishable from post-Civil War South, advocating to rewrite history with the Lost Cause narrative to censor truths about slavery or as they disappear students who write dissenting op eds, it's reminiscent of the suppression of abolitionist newspapers.

And the department's financial aid policies harken back to a time when higher education was reserved for affluent, well-connected and predominantly White students. So I have some questions, excuse me, about why this department is taking its leads from Jim Crow. Secretary McMahon, you've claimed that you want to drastically reduce the already very small federal role in education and also that you will not cut Title 1-A funding.

That is still your position, correct?

LINDA MCMAHON: Correct.

SUMMER LEE: Thank you. I'd like a yes or no answer. Do you believe you're April 3rd attempt to revoke Title 1-A funding from states unless they signed a certification of compliance with your political viewpoint was consistent with giving states more control over education?

LINDA MCMAHON: There's been no reduction in funding for Title 1-A --

SUMMER LEE: As of now? There has not been yet?

LINDA MCMAHON: Correct, and it is not going forward in the budget.

SUMMER LEE: So you believe that that's -- OK. Yes, or no, is title one funding actually secure for every school district and state that currently receives it, or is your goal to make Title 1 a conditional on states refusing to provide students of color, LGBTQA students, students with disabilities or other marginalized students, opportunities to participate in diverse, inclusive, equitable and accessible learning environments?

LINDA MCMAHON: No. That's what I answered. 1-A funding is intact.

SUMMER LEE: OK. So let's talk about so-called illegal DEI, as you all have called it, a phrase you continually bring up that I'm still unclear on, especially after three federal judges have preliminarily ruled that your illegal DEI guidance is likely unconstitutional and unenforceable, illegal as it were. Secretary McMahon, during your confirmation hearing you were asked by Senator Chris Murphy if an African-American history class violated the administration's position on diversity, equity and inclusion.

You said you'd like to look into it. You've been on the job for a few months now. Have you been able to look into it?

LINDA MCMAHON: I do not think that African studies or Middle East studies or Chinese studies are part of DEI if they are taught as part of the total history package. So that if you're giving the facts on both sides, of course they're not DEI.

SUMMER LEE: I don't know what both sides of African American history would be.

LINDA MCMAHON: Well, if African American history is part of part history --

SUMMER LEE: Certainly, but what we recognize throughout public -- what we recognize throughout education is that a course is only one year or one semester. It would be impossible to teach African history and say, European history at the same time. Do you not agree that it makes sense that there would be separate courses for these courses of study?

It has happened throughout history. We're able to do it not just in history courses, we're able to do it with different types of literature courses or different types of music courses. One wouldn't learn about baroque music and necessarily have to also learn about African drumming at the same time. Right?

We can separate those courses.

LINDA MCMAHON: Yes, we can, I think just as we teach us history as a separate course.

SUMMER LEE: Certainly, so you do not agree -- so you do agree that African American cultures and African history should not be eliminated from courses, particularly AP African history?

LINDA MCMAHON: Well, I think that African history can certainly be taught and not be considered a DEI course.

SUMMER LEE: Thank you. I have a few other examples that I would like your thoughts on, simple yes or no, if this is a legal DEI, an example. Would you say that it would be an illegal DEI for a lesson plan on the Tulsa Race Massacre?

LINDA MCMAHON: I'd have to get back to you on that.

SUMMER LEE: Do you know what the Tulsa Race Massacre is?

LINDA MCMAHON: I'd like to look into it more and get back to you on it.

SUMMER LEE: OK. So I look forward to that. How about the book *Through My Eyes* by Ruby Bridges, for instance?

LINDA MCMAHON: I haven't read that.

SUMMER LEE: Have you learned about Ruby Bridges?

LINDA MCMAHON: If you have specific examples you'd like to provide --

SUMMER LEE: That was a specific example.

LINDA MCMAHON: I'll be very happy --

SUMMER LEE: It was an incredibly specific example. I named a specific book.

LINDA MCMAHON: -- for you to submit those in your questions and I will look into it and get back to you on them. I look forward to answering them --

SUMMER LEE: How about a school having a voluntary celebration for Pride month?

LINDA MCMAHON: Well, I think that --

SUMMER LEE: Voluntary.

LINDA MCMAHON: Well, let's make sure that in our schools, that we're looking --

SUMMER LEE: This is yes or no.

LINDA MCMAHON: No, it's not.

SUMMER LEE: OK. How about social studies standards that teach that President Biden won the 2020 election?

LINDA MCMAHON: I think our studies should all be taught accurately.

SUMMER LEE: Yes or no.

LINDA MCMAHON: I think our studies should be taught accurately.

SUMMER LEE: No, no, no, the question was, do you believe that social studies standards that teach that President Biden won the 2020 election is an illegal DEI, yes or no?

LINDA MCMAHON: I think I have said we should teach accurately. We should [Inaudible]

SUMMER LEE: No, you have not answered the question. I don't understand why you're incapable of answering --

LINDA MCMAHON: Well, I answered your question, I'm just not giving you the answer you want but I am answering the questions.

SUMMER LEE: No, I want the answer, whatever your answer is.

LINDA MCMAHON: I just gave you the answer.

SUMMER LEE: No, the answer is yes or no.

LINDA MCMAHON: No, the answer is, I think --

SUMMER LEE: But the answer is yes or no.

TIM WALBERG: Gentlelady's time is --

SUMMER LEE: Thank you so much. I yield back.

TIM WALBERG: -- expired. I now recognize the gentlelady from Michigan, Ms. McLain.

LISA MCCLAIN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you, Madam Secretary, for being here and thank you so much for your leadership in our joint efforts to downsize the Department of Education. Like you and the president, I believe education policy is best determined by states and local communities, along with parents. Obviously, the closer you are to the students, the more interactive and the more hands on experience you really have.

We have this to deliver the best outcomes for the students. I think that is our goal, is to make sure we're delivering the best outcomes to the students. To that aim, we have seen states, teachers' unions and other bulldozed parents' rights in a pursuit of indoctrination over education. And I think that's what you were alluding to earlier is we'll teach any subject as long as we can correct the truth with the other half of the truth, and we can teach both sides, which seems what education used to be. We used to teach, and I'm wondering if you agree with me on this, we used to teach children how to think, as opposed to what to think.

Would that be an accurate assessment?

LINDA MCMAHON: I think we do need to get back to teaching children more how to think.

LISA MCCLAIN: Amen. So as we return power to local communities, how I'm trying to figure out how can the federal government fulfill its role in protecting students and the parents' rights? How do you see the federal government and how can we help ensure that we're protecting students and the people that get lost sometimes, the parents?

How do we do that?

LINDA MCMAHON: Well, certainly returning education back to the states, back more local control. But really, what that means and what the president has said to me is that he would like to take the bureaucracy out of education. The Department of Education does not establish curriculum in a state. It doesn't hire teachers.

It doesn't say what books to buy. It doesn't do any of those things. It is a great pass-through of funding that is appropriated by Congress through Title 1 IDEA. Both of those are staying totally intact, but there are competitive grants that are then reviewed by the Department of Education. And so those competitive grants do go to states.

And so what we want to do is to make more money available to go directly to the states. When you consider the fact that of every dollar that goes to a state, a teacher is spending about \$0.47 of that dollar in regulatory compliance. But if we can get rid of a lot of the red tape that goes along with those grants and those

requirements, then there's more money for the states to put forth the programs that they would like to put forth, and that's clearly one of the president's goals.

LISA MCCLAIN: Yeah. I don't want to put words in your mouth, but I want to make sure that I understand you correctly. So what you're saying is if we took that dollar that right now is earmarked, and \$0.47 of that dollar is going for compliance issues, regulatory issues, right, you're saying we would actually have more of that dollar to give to the actual student?

LINDA MCMAHON: Certainly the goal.

LISA MCCLAIN: Wow, what a concept. Who could not be for that? I just don't understand. If our goal is truly to educate the student, who would not be for giving more money to the student.

LINDA MCMAHON: Not only giving more money to the students, but to make sure that parental rights are protected, that parents have more say so in the curriculum that their students are being taught, that they understand what is going on in the classroom. And I urge parents to take a more active role in their student's education.

I think that teaching is one of the most noble professions in our country, but they do need support. They need support at home and I think parents can and many parents are so involved, but I urge parents to become more involved in school board elections and just attending those meetings that impact their children.

LISA MCCLAIN: So it's actually a good thing when parents show up at school board meetings and it's really a good thing when parents are involved. They're not terrorists or whatnot. That's a good thing. We actually want parents involved in the students' education.

LINDA MCMAHON: Absolutely.

LISA MCCLAIN: To that end, I know parents have the right to opt out of specific lesson plans for their child if it goes against their specific religious belief or whatnot. But I believe at times it's difficult for the parent to get that done. What do you see moving forward to make it easier for parents to opt their child out of something that they don't want them involved in? How do you see that happening?

LINDA MCMAHON: Well, there again, that's really part of the local education system and the Department of Education does not have jurisdiction or control over that. I would just urge parents, though, independently to continue to approach their school boards, their individual schools, the teachers and the superintendents to make their voices heard.

LISA MCCLAIN: And with that, my time has expired. Thank you all for all of your work to getting actual more dollars to where it should go, to the actual students. So thank you.

TIM WALBERG: I thank the gentlelady.

LINDA MCMAHON: Thank you.

TIM WALBERG: And I recognize the gentleman from California, Mr. DeSaulnier.

MARK DESAULNIER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'd like to ask unanimous consent to enter into the record a statement from the National Disability Rights Network, discussing how the Department of Education's proposed budget cuts would eliminate critical programs that provide advocacy services to individuals with disabilities.

TIM WALBERG: Without objection.

MARK DESAULNIER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Madam Secretary, thank you for being here today. I'm particularly interested in your comments and your background as a person who comes from the private sector business about how you create efficiencies. And to one person's bureaucracy, another one is a good valued employee, whether it's a public or private sector.

I want to start by reading a quote from the federal judge who stopped the closure of the Department of Education and layoffs. Judge John said that in regards to the layoffs of this scale, quote, will likely cripple the department. The idea that the defendant's actions are merely a reorganization is plainly not true.

She goes on to say, a department without enough employees to perform statutory mandated functions is not a department at all. This court cannot be asked to cover its eyes while a department's employees are continuously fired and units are transferred out until the department becomes a shell of itself. So this is in the context of your eliminating staff, bureaucrats, I think to your words.

The judge clearly disagreed with you. And in the context of special education where we've seen students, a number of special education students in the last 10 years, doubled. I don't know if you've ever sat down with a parent or a special educator and try to work with them and see what they have to go through to get the services that they are statutorily allowed to do, signed by President Gerald Ford, the IDEA program.

Have you ever done that? Have you met with special ed kids and their parents?

LINDA MCMAHON: Yes, I have and I was very involved in Special Olympics for a good time and started that program in my prior profession and was astounded at all of the programs that that we need for those students and very heartrending sometimes, the stories with those parents.

MARK DESAULNIER: So when President Ford signed that bipartisan bill, the federal government promised, in 1974 if memory serves me, that we would pay 40 percent of IDEA. Do you know what that number is now and historically has been?

LINDA MCMAHON: I believe that Congress has appropriated no more than about 18 percent at this particular point for that program.

MARK DESAULNIER: At 18 percent at a high end. It's more like 10 to 12 percent.

LINDA MCMAHON: Yeah, I think in 2025 it was a -- I'm just checking my numbers now, it was about 10.7 percent.

MARK DESAULNIER: So help me understand, we're going to cut thousands of people who help provide these services, but don't get paid enough and there are not enough of them and we give more control to local government. But how do they have control when they never got the resources that they needed? I've had superintendents tell me that we put more money into schools in California over the years.

They could take all of that money and put it in a special education and it still wouldn't be enough to make up for the lack of investment from the federal government based on a bill that was signed by a Republican president.

LINDA MCMAHON: Well, that's not from the Department of Education. That's the appropriation coming from Congress. So I think that's up to you, sir.

MARK DESAULNIER: Where does that money go to in the Department of Education is a key part of giving them the best practices so they can understand how to serve the people at the local level. It's fine to say we were going to give it back to local control, which I completely agree with. It's fine to say it's going to go back to the States, but they have to have the resources under a federal statute to perform the requirements under the federal statute, which I assume given your background and working with special ed kids, you want them to get that.

We know we all benefit from having special ed kids get the support. And specifically, does the department intend eliminating -- you talked about parent involvement, the Congressionally mandated parent training and information centers? Are you going to continue to support those? And who's going to support those?

LINDA MCMAHON: Well, sir, as I said, the IDEA funding is level funded. There have been no uh no cuts in that. It's going directly as it has before, without changes from us.

MARK DESAULNIER: Having run businesses, I think we're just having a communication problem. How can you say your level of funding, but you're cutting staff and sending it back to local government without the funding? Seems like a contradiction to me, with all due respect, Madam Secretary.

LINDA MCMAHON: I don't know what you mean by I'm cutting staff relative to states and how they are handling IDEA funding and how they are taking those dollars into their schools. The staff that we've cut at the Department of Education, let me just reiterate what I said before. We are totally in compliance with all of our statutory obligations.

MARK DESAULNIER: Oh, I'm told I have extra time because they messed up a clock. I'm sure it's a plot, Mr. Chairman, but I would love to continue the conversation. We clearly don't understand one another and maybe I'm responsible for part of that. I don't understand as a former business owner, how you can eliminate the Department of Education or attempt to, judge says you're not.

You cannot do that. By the way, are you going to comply with what the judge has ordered?

LINDA MCMAHON: I will, but let me remind you that IDEA was in existence before the Department of Education. I believe it started in 1965 and was distributed to the States and I think it would continue to be distributed if there was no Department of Education.

MARK DESAULNIER: I would respectfully disagree. You have to have people with expertise in order to implement the law. And I know at least in the case that I've spent a lot of time with special ed kids and their families, they rely on the best practices supplied at the national level so that they can perform at a local level.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

LINDA MCMAHON: Well, they came from somewhere before the Department of Education. So those people are --

MARK DESAULNIER: Ma'am, that's the reason we started the program, is because they were suffering and failing.

TIM WALBERG: I think now the gentleman's time has finally expired. We've got it back on track.

MARK DESAULNIER: Thank you.

TIM WALBERG: I thank the gentleman. I yield to the gentleman from Georgia, Mr. Allen.

RICK ALLEN: Thank you, Madam Secretary, for your work on behalf of all the parents and children of this country. I've been very impressed with your work. During my time in Congress, I've been a staunch advocate for school choice. Every child and every family is unique in their own way and when it comes to learning, it's no different.

In fact, in every public school that my children have attended, my wife and I have gotten very involved in that process. And it makes a difference with the parents getting involved. We've seen an explosion of interest in school choice. And as I'm sure you know, even in the last few months, states such as Tennessee, South Carolina, Idaho, Wyoming and Texas are considering implementing school choice legislation.

However, all these success stories, many states refuse to even consider school choice. Many states seem insistent on trapping kids in failing schools. In a country where school choice has already been implemented in many areas with great success, including the 12th district of Georgia, why do so many states refuse to even consider choice?

LINDA MCMAHON: Well, I think you'd have to ask the governors and the superintendents of education in those particular states. That clearly is a -- that's a state function.

RICK ALLEN: Important question.

LINDA MCMAHON: A very important question.

RICK ALLEN: They should answer.

LINDA MCMAHON: I can tell you that what we are starting to see and why you see more states now looking at school choice options, is because our education system right now is failing our students.

RICK ALLEN: Yes. Well, we're spending the most money and getting the -- 30th in the world. I mean.

LINDA MCMAHON: And so I think governors who are being innovative on their own are looking at different programs in their states. And they are seeing the success rates returning to classical education, in some states where the science of reading has been so incredibly successful, like the miracle of Mississippi that we've looked at. And the recent NAEP scores for the state of Louisiana, we have seen that they've had the greatest improvement in their scores relative to others.

So now there's a competitive factor going on among the states and those who are recognizing what's worked are starting to look at it and adopt and say maybe we ought to take another look at this.

RICK ALLEN: Exactly. Because if you're going to compete in economic development and business growth and job growth in this country, you got to have a workforce, an educated workforce. And it's more important than ever because the workforce today is very technical and has to have a degree of education to deal with all of the digital aspects of production and everything else.

Getting on to higher education, the cost of college continues to rise. It's imperative that students graduating from high school know that there are many paths to a career and not every career requires multiple degrees. Having built a small business, I have experienced firsthand how hard it is to find skilled and qualified workers.

We got to bridge that gap. And I was proud to vote for the One Big, Beautiful Bill, which included two big Pell policies. First, the bill reinvested billions to close the current Pell shortfall. Second, it opened up Pell to high-quality, short-term programs. Can you talk more about why this administration supports short-term Pell and what such a program would do for our workforce?

LINDA MCMAHON: Well, just not everyone can afford even a two-year community college. So short-term Pell Grants, which are 8 to 14 weeks, I believe, or 8 to 15 weeks, provide those opportunities to learn and gain a skill and get into the workforce much faster. It's good for employees. It's good for employers to get them into the economy faster.

So the short-term workforce Pell Grant, I'm a strong supporter of.

RICK ALLEN: Great. What changes, if any, do you believe need to be made to Perkins Reauthorization to improve outcomes for students?

LINDA MCMAHON: Well, I just think that we have to have a better alignment with the Perkins programs, with what our workforce innovation programs are. I just don't think they're aligned enough that we're holding them accountable enough for those. And I think we can close that gap because it's very worthwhile.

RICK ALLEN: Right. Good. Well, I'm all with you on the competition among states. States compete for economic development and states are paying closer attention to workforce development because it's critical as far as economic development, and thank you for your service to this country.

LINDA MCMAHON: Thank you, sir.

RICK ALLEN: I yield back.

TIM WALBERG: I thank the gentleman. I now recognize the new member of the committee for our first round of questioning on this committee, Representative Ansari.

YASSAMIN ANSARI: Thank you so much for being here. Secretary McMahon. I agree that for many students in America, our education system is absolutely failing them. This is especially true for low income families and for folks in rural communities, but that's not because of too much federal oversight or the DEI policies, like your administration claims.

It's because in many states, like the state I represent in Arizona, we have woefully underfunded our public education system. Now your administration wants to dismantle the Department of Education. I'm wondering if you can respond briefly, do you believe there is a constitutional or operational path to eliminating the Department of Education and if so, what is the timeline and process?

LINDA MCMAHON: Well, certainly. And in fact, when President Trump issued his executive order, his executive order indicated for me to start dismantling the Department of Education lawfully. We both know, as does everyone in this room, that the Department of Education cannot be dismantled without the approval of Congress.

And so that would be the path we would have to take. And I said in my confirmation hearing that I wanted to work with Congress so that we could arrive at a good plan to show what the Department of Education is doing, could be handled with other agencies and that we could see improvements for education throughout the country.

YASSAMIN ANSARI: And what risk did you weigh for public schools and universities if federal education funding is gutted or devolved to the states?

LINDA MCMAHON: Well, federal education wouldn't necessarily be gutted. I believe there would be more money to go to the States without the bureaucracy of the Department of Education. When you think about how many people that there are at the department and some of those services can be handled by other agencies, there would be less money taken out of the overall budget, more money to be available to go to the States.

YASSAMIN ANSARI: So here's the thing, Madam Secretary, and why I strongly believe that you're wrong. One big risk I see right off the bat is that some states, again, the state I represent, Arizona, have an abysmal track record of managing education. Last year, Arizona was dead last in a national list of the best states for public education.

We have some of the lowest teacher salaries, low test scores and the highest student to teacher ratio in the country. After years of cutting funding for public education, Republicans in Arizona have tried to fix our education system with universal school vouchers. Secretary McMahon, do you support expanding school choice vouchers nationwide?

LINDA MCMAHON: Well, one thing I would like to bring to your attention --

YASSAMIN ANSARI: This is a yes or no.

LINDA MCMAHON: -- which you may already know, is that the federal government only provides about 8 to 10 percent of the total education budget to states.

YASSAMIN ANSARI: Do you support expanding -- it's a yes or no question. Do you support the --

[*]LINDA MCMAHON: No, it isn't. These are policies that are --

YASSAMIN ANSARI: Ok.

LINDA MCMAHON: That are established by the states, and I think --

YASSAMIN ANSARI: Reclaiming my time --

LINDA MCMAHON: That the states should --

YASSAMIN ANSARI: Secretary, thank you.

LINDA MCMAHON: Should adjust and provide their own education philosophy.

YASSAMIN ANSARI: When it comes to -- to vouchers, would you say that you support taxpayers subsidizing wealthy students' tuition at expensive private schools?

LINDA MCMAHON: I think that -- again, these -- these are issues within the states, you know, to look at.

YASSAMIN ANSARI: It's a yes or no.

LINDA MCMAHON: No, there's a school choice issue.

YASSAMIN ANSARI: Do you support the subsidizing for wealthy students?

LINDA MCMAHON: There -- there are issues within states that they should look at.

YASSAMIN ANSARI: Ok. That sounds like a yes. Do you support those vouchers being used for things like expensive ski trips, \$1,000 Lego sets or pianos for individual families?

LINDA MCMAHON: Of course not.

YASSAMIN ANSARI: So, I -- I heard the -- my colleague from the other side of the aisle just previously talking about how wonderful vouchers are. And I just want to share a couple of articles, and I'm sure you all can't see from here, but these are all from the last couple of years in Arizona. It's titled parents of private voucher students spent over \$1 million of public money buying Lego sets.

Another one, Arizona Empowerment scholarships, what \$304 million, bought ranges from tuition to trampoline parks, a lot of waste, fraud and abuse happening. And another analysis, more than half of ESA students come from high income zip codes. So, in Arizona, Secretary, this is exactly what's happening. 77

percent of those vouchers have gone to students in the wealthiest zip codes to fund their expensive private schools and luxury items, all while defunding public schools that the rest of our students attend.

Does it sound to you like Arizona's voucher program is improving our education system?

LINDA MCMAHON: It sounds like you've got an issue in Arizona that you should address with your governor and with --

YASSAMIN ANSARI: And that's -- no, it's actually our state legislature --

LINDA MCMAHON: And with -- well, then --

YASSAMIN ANSARI: That is ballooning the state voucher system.

LINDA MCMAHON: Then do it with your state legislature and all of that. That's a state issue.

YASSAMIN ANSARI: So, in Arizona, the issue --

LINDA MCMAHON: It's a state issue.

YASSAMIN ANSARI: Has been a disaster, and this is exactly why a federal Department of Education is so vital. School vouchers have decimated our budget by \$1 billion, again, Republican controlled state legislature for, I think, 60-some years, costing taxpayers way more than simply raising school funding would have. So, you have a clear test case in Arizona which has failed miserably.

I'm not sure why we would want to subject the rest of the country to the same problems.

TIM WALBERG: The gentlelady's time is expired. Yields back, and I recognize the gentleman from Illinois, Ms. Miller.

MARY MILLER: Well, good morning, Secretary McMahan, and thank you for the great work that you and President Trump are doing to reform the Department of Education. The last four years under the Biden administration have been a disaster for the public education system, for parental rights, and for student safety. And the most racist thing that's been going on in our country has been the unanimous support of the Democrats and the teacher's union to force inner city children, black and brown children, into failing schools while denying their parents the opportunity to seek alternative options.

Children as young as kindergarten have been subjected to drag queen story hours, and pro LGBTQAI2S+ curriculums. Shockingly, the Department of Education had the audacity to call parents domestic terrorists and proceeded to investigate and intimidate them into submission. Scott Smith was arrested --

LINDA MCMAHON: State -- State Department of Education.

MARY MILLER: The -- the Biden Department of Education.

LINDA MCMAHON: The Biden department.

MARY MILLER: Yes. Scott Smith was arrested at a Loudoun County school board meeting over voicing his outrage that his 15 year old daughter was raped by a boy dressed as a girl in a public school bathroom, and then the school sought to cover it up. Now, after being soundly defeated last November, Democrats in states like Maine, California, and my home state of Illinois continue to defy federal law by forcing our girls to compete against biological men and change with them in locker rooms.

Thankfully, President Trump and yourself are taking action to stop this madness and are striving toward the ultimate goal of returning education to the states and to the parents, where it belongs. So, Madam Secretary, thank you for your recent response to my letters addressing Title IX violations in Dearborn and Naperville, Illinois.

Could you please elaborate on what the Department of Education is doing to investigate similar violations in other school districts, and whether their federal funding will be rescinded for failing to comply with federal law?

LINDA MCMAHON: Thank you very much. And we are indeed investigating, you know, many cases that come up under Title IX. I mean, I was, you know, informed, I think it was yesterday, that in Colorado there was a -- you know, as part of the public school system on school trips, that there were boys sleeping perhaps in beds, boys -- I'm sorry, boys who were identifying as girls sleeping in the same bed with girls on these class trips, and parents were not even notified.

I just think that that's incredibly wrong. That is a Title IX violation that we'll be, you know, investigating. There is a -- you know, a -- I think there's in Wyoming a college, you know, that had, again, boys joining girl's sororities. Again, Title IX violations. We -- we are going to investigate them, and we will look at whatever options, you know, that we have available, whether it is defunding some of those programs, so yes.

MARY MILLER: Thank you. And thank you for fighting hard for school choice. I -- actually, homeschooling's very near and dear to me. I actually -- I'm a teacher, and I ended up home educating my seven children. Most of them have chosen to do the same. As parents saw the filth being taught to their children during the COVID-19 lockdowns, many began homeschooling.

Recently, Democrat run states like Illinois are seeking to significantly limit the right of parents to home educate their children. What can the Department of Education do to ensure that this fundamental right is protected?

LINDA MCMAHON: Well, that's clearly one of the things that -- that President Trump has talked about and what I've addressed earlier, you know, in -- in my testimony today. And that is that the -- the president absolutely does believe that all children should have a right, you know, to an excellent education. They should have that choice, and that that choice should be supported.

Whether it is homeschooling, private schools, public schools, charter schools, all of those should -- should receive their -- you know, their funding and that states should look at the choice options.

MARY MILLER: Thank you. Competition makes everything better. As I mentioned earlier, the Biden administration launched an assault on parental rights in education. Aside from curriculums, according to Parents Defending Education, at least 20,000 schools in 1,100 districts have policies that parents [Audio gap] without the student's permission.

What is the Department of Education doing to hold these schools accountable?

LINDA MCMAHON: Well, if I'm -- if I'm not incorrect, that falls under, you know, FERPA, which -- which clearly is a statute that says that parents have the right to the information that is contained in their -- in their children's records. And I absolutely believe that to be true.

MARY MILLER: Thank you, and I yield back.

TIM WALBERG: Thank the gentlelady.

YASSAMIN ANSARI: Mr. Chair, I -- could I ask unanimous consent to enter three articles into the record?

TIM WALBERG: Without objection.

YASSAMIN ANSARI: Ok. First, parents of private voucher students spent over \$1 million of public money buying Lego sets; two, Arizona empowerment scholarships, what \$304 million bought; and three, analysis, more than half of ESA students come from high income ZIP codes. Thank you.

TIM WALBERG: Without objection, they are submitted. I now recognize the gentleman from New York, Mr. Mannion.

JOHN MANNION: Thank you, Mr. Chair. And thank you, Secretary McMahon. Today's hearing is an important one. Since the start of the administration, students, families and educators across the country have been incredibly concerned about the direction that you and the president are attempting to take both in K-12 and higher education.

And your attempts to weaken or close the Department of Education are -- acts of recklessness, and have already done significant damage. There's a lot I'd like to ask about, but in your fiscal year '26 budget request, I want to discuss programs serving students with disabilities. Your budget recommends consolidating seven programs under the IDEA into a single block grant to states.

So, you're specifically talking about eliminating special education programs for preschools, teacher preparation, parent information centers, technical assistance and educational technology. I was a teacher of AP Biology and Chemistry in a 15 to 1 living environment. I'm also the parent of a student with a disability.

And I acknowledge that you intend to maintain the overall funding level for IDEA under this consolidated grant, but structure matters. These programs were created independently for a very good reason, to ensure proper oversight to serve different populations and to meet the full range of needs for students with disabilities.

Madam Secretary, how can you assure us that states will maintain sufficient support for all of these critical areas like preschool special education and parental assistance if the federal government no longer requires them to do so and will do so under separate targeted programs?

LINDA MCMAHON: Well, I think funding under the Grants to States program would continue to be allocated to the states and LEAs in accordance with Section 611. So, that will remain. What we found is that we have so many of these different diverse programs, and if there are -- like, I think there are six of them in total that would come under a block grant.

And -- and states would have greater flexibility in terms of making sure that those -- that IDEA funding went to where it should be. You know, the whole -- I'm sure you know probably better than anyone or as well as anyone that the process of writing grants, the people you have to hire, the strings that are attached, you know, when -- when individual grants, you know, do come in, is really burdensome and expensive.

And so, the hope is and the goal is that, by giving this in terms of the one grant bucket, if you will, that there are less strings attached and it affords greater flexibility for states to put that money where it's needed.

JOHN MANNION: If a school district does not follow the proper mechanisms for administering that grant for the students to receive the individualized services that they need, is there any specific accountability measures that will occur coming out of the Department of Education or any other federal government agency?

LINDA MCMAHON: Well, there's also -- there's always the opportunity of defunding. We don't want to take, you know, any of the tools off the table. But I would like -- if there is a specific question, I would always want to look into that and to find out exactly -- but we'd always investigate. And if there are reports that this is not being spent the way it's supposed to, we'd always investigate.

JOHN MANNION: There's been a lot of discussion and questions regarding parental access and parental input. So, I was in a classroom for almost 30 years. And over the course of those 30 years, what I saw was the implementation of emails, online grades being able to be accessed by parents, shared decision making committees, an increase in the number of parent-teacher conferences and meet the teacher nights, the ability for students to audiotape or videotape lessons, and teachers themselves providing curriculum online and posting their lessons, sometimes a video recording of their lessons online.

So, is it your opinion that, over the course of those 30 years, that parents have less access to information about their students education?

LINDA MCMAHON: Well, clearly you've made the case for innovative teaching. And I think that's what we should, through our regulations, allow teachers to do, and that's teach. Let's take the handcuffs and the red tape of compliance with regulations off them and let them do what they want to do. And we will see better results with children.

JOHN MANNION: Thank you. Should a parent have the ability to opt their child out of a unit on evolution?

LINDA MCMAHON: Yes.

JOHN MANNION: Should a school district be able to eliminate evolution from a biology curriculum?

LINDA MCMAHON: I think that parents should have -- under -- under parental rights, I think parents look at curriculum in terms of maybe their own ideals, maybe their own religious backgrounds, and have the opportunity to opt out of a particular course.

JOHN MANNION: Thank you, Madam Secretary. Thank you, Mister Chair.

TIM WALBERG: I thank the gentleman. I recognize the subcommittee chairman on Early Childhood, Elementary, and Secondary Education, the gentleman from California, Mr. Kiley.

KEVIN KILEY: Hello, Secretary McMahon. It was just five months ago that we had a secretary of education who was an enthusiastic supporter of shutting down schools during COVID, who was an enthusiastic supporter of forcing two year olds to wear masks, who actually encouraged school districts K-12 schools to adopt COVID vaccine mandates.

We had an administration that investigated parents as domestic terrorists for showing up at school board meetings, that attacked charter schools, that refused to condemn universities for caving to the demands of anti-Semites, that set out to destroy girls sports, and that saw \$200 billion added to education spending while student performance plummeted.

Things are a little different now, aren't they?

LINDA MCMAHON: I certainly hope so.

KEVIN KILEY: But unfortunately, in my state of California, they're the same -- or actually they're worse than they've ever been. And you've already taken a number of steps to try to help out students in California. I did just want to highlight a couple other areas where the problems in our state's education system may fall within your jurisdiction in upholding the civil rights laws.

First is, when it comes to charter schools, I know you're a huge supporter of charters. And I believe you support the bill I've introduced, the High Quality Charter Schools Act. But in California, the governor and the legislature have declared war on charter schools. They're trying to stop new charters from starting.

They're trying to shut down high performing charters. A particularly egregious example is in Santa Clara. The Office of Education told one of the highest performing public schools in the state, Bullis Charter School, that unless you engage in outright racial discrimination, we're going to non-renew your charter.

Unless you have fewer Asian students, we're going to non-renew your charter. And then there was something similar that happened at Oakland Unified, where a charter school actually was non-renewed for similar reasons. So, that's charter schools. The second issue is ethnic studies. So, the state has seen fit to adopt a new ethnic studies graduation requirement for high school, but some districts have gone above and beyond and are already offering what's being called liberated ethnic studies.

Now, both the model curriculum and these more specific liberated ethnic studies curriculums have been condemned as being overtly anti-Semitic. We saw an example of this, actually, in the last Congress when the superintendent of Berkeley Unified testified here that she thought a slide showing that -- students that the expression from the river to the sea is a valid perspective.

She saw no problem with that. So, I know that you may not want to comment on particular investigations that may or may not be under consideration, but do you see these as areas in which you might be able to help us out, either one of them?

LINDA MCMAHON: Well, a lot of that definitely still does fall within the local or state jurisdiction for schools. But I think in terms of universities, you've already seen how the Department of Education will come in for -- you know for Title IX violations. And so, we would continue to do that.

KEVIN KILEY: Well, thank you very much. And I did want to say just a word about the situation at universities as well. Now, I have zero sympathy for Harvard. They were rated as having the very worst protections for free speech of any university in the country, actually any university in the history of the survey. And then when it came to anti-Semitism, I think it's actually underappreciated the horrors that happened on that campus.

We've heard from Jewish students at that university here who have testified how they were afraid to leave their dorms, how if they did they were harassed, they were physically assaulted. You had pro-Hamas thugs who would follow them to class and monitor their movements. All the while, the university failed to protect them, instead catering to the demands of their tormentors.

So, I have very little sympathy for the university. And I think when they say, oh, well, we've changed some things or we did a task force, clearly inadequate. What happened on that campus reviving one of the -- the most perhaps retrograde and ancient prejudice in world history and becoming a hotbed for it on their campus, that reflects a fundamental sickness that requires fundamental reform.

So, I think that what the administration is doing is absolutely necessary. The one point I would just raise is I wonder a little bit what the end game is here. You know, our universities have had a lot of problems in recent years and decades. They cost too much. They deliver too little value to students, and they've incubated a lot of the problems we have more broadly as a country.

But throughout our history, they've actually been huge national assets. You know, it's a -- it's a great thing for our country that we've had universities that lead the world, and the best and brightest from all around the world want to study at and then contribute to our country. So -- so, the word of caution I might just add is that, when it comes to the ultimate goal here, I hope that the goal is not to reduce these institutions to a shadow of their former selves, but rather to revive the ideals that used to guide universities and to restore them to being national assets again rather than the liabilities that they've become.

And I'd be very happy to help in any way that I can with that goal.

LINDA MCMAHON: Thank you very much, and I'd like to work with you on that.

KEVIN KILEY: Thanks very much. Yield back.

TIM WALBERG: I thank the gentleman. I recognize the gentlelady from Connecticut, Ms. Hayes.

JAHANA HAYES: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And Secretary, welcome to our committee. It's interesting, I took a lot of notes. I had prepared questions, but I think I'm going in a very different direction. We've heard other colleagues talk about the NAEP scores. And I heard you say that the president was angered and embarrassed by these, and I think we all should be. But when you disaggregate those scores, they clearly show that low income students score significantly lower than their white and higher income peers.

And that is mostly in part to ongoing disparities in educational access and quality, which makes much of what I'm hearing today that much more relevant. You mentioned Connecticut. We both come from the state of Connecticut. Connecticut relies on property taxes to fund education, and we have the -- one of the largest income gaps in the nation, which means, by design or default, low income students face multiple challenges, including limited access to resources and opportunities outside of schools, which is why I don't understand many of the decisions made in this budget.

One of my colleagues asked about collecting data on family composition and background. The Department of Education Office of Civil Rights is mandated by law to do that. I was pleased to hear you say that states do not -- I mean the federal -- the Department of Education does not control curriculum, instruction, instructional materials, the teachers that are hired, which makes your words contradictory because every argument you have is to put local control back into the -- into the states, but states already have local control, as anyone who has any knowledge or background of education would already know.

The role of the Department of Education would be the civil rights enforcement of those local controls, which, again, the irony of this budget zeroing out American history and civic education programs when you couldn't even answer a question about Ruby Bridges or the election of President Biden, which are as basic as it gets.

So, I really, really don't understand it. But you are making the argument for me because, when you respond to questions from my colleagues by saying that sounds like an issue for state legislatures, that is why the Office of Civil Rights is necessary, because state legislatures made the decision that Ruby Bridges did not have the right to a free and appropriate high quality public education.

So you, Madam Secretary, are actually making the argument for the role of the department not to dictate local curriculum instruction or instructional materials, but to make sure that those things are carried out by the department, I mean that states follow the law that, they are doing those things. So, 49 million children in this country receive public education services.

About three million children are in charter schools. There are not enough charter school slots. So, my questions are mainly focused on what about those other 46 million children. So, I'm going to -- I mean, I -- it's mind blowing. I hear you talk about safety, keeping students safe on school campuses, but not a word about the 390,000 students who have been affected by gun violence.

I was in the classroom on the day Sandy hook happened, and the federal government came in with almost \$2 million to rebuild that community and provide programs for the surrounding communities. In your opening, I heard you mention student athletes and LGBTQ students twice, not one word. And even when my colleague asked you if you thought it was a public health crisis, you can't answer questions that affect the majority of students.

So, I'm not really sure. I mean, I try to -- I am an educator by nature. I try to be supportive of what the Department of Education does because I need for you to succeed for my students to succeed. But when you come in and say your final mission is to eliminate the department, it says to me that the 46 million children that are not receiving services do not matter.

I've ran out most of my time, but this bill defunds literacy programs, eliminates 21st Century Community Learning Center, eliminates preschool grants for children with disabilities, eliminates -- reduces funding for career and technical education, like all of these things. I'm going to ask you two really quick questions.

Do you think that Holocaust education in our schools is a DEI program? There's no card for that. That's just yes or no?

LINDA MCMAHON: I can look at whatever card I choose.

JAHANA HAYES: Holocaust education, is it a DEI --

LINDA MCMAHON: Thank you very much.

JAHANA HAYES: You can have a press conference to say whatever you want. I just need a quick answer to this.

LINDA MCMAHON: Well, your soliloquy is [Off-mic].

JAHANA HAYES: Is Holocaust -- because this is my time. Is Holocaust education a DEI program?

LINDA MCMAHON: No.

JAHANA HAYES: Is African American studies a DEI program?

LINDA MCMAHON: I think I answered that with one of your other colleagues.

JAHANA HAYES: I'm asking it again.

LINDA MCMAHON: Listen, we should be able --

JAHANA HAYES: Just yes or no?

LINDA MCMAHON: We should be able to teach course in their entirety.

JAHANA HAYES: My point is they are DEI programs, both of them, because students need diversity, equity and inclusion to understand their environments. So, both Holocaust education and the teaching of African

American history are important, which is why the state of Connecticut requires it in our social studies curriculum.

You're talking out of both sides of your mouth. You can't support one without supporting the other --

TIM WALBERG: The gentlelady's time has --

JAHANA HAYES: And looking at what happens in the schools and actually deferring to teachers, parents who are on curriculum committees, local boards of education in states who actually do the hard work --

TIM WALBERG: The gentlelady's time is expired.

JAHANA HAYES: And listening to what they say --

TIM WALBERG: I appreciate the passion --

JAHANA HAYES: Would be incredibly helpful in this role.

TIM WALBERG: But it's time to move on and --

JAHANA HAYES: I yield back.

TIM WALBERG: Recognize the gentleman from Ohio, Mr. Rulli.

MICHAEL RULLI: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And thank you, Madam Secretary, for coming today. We really appreciate your time. I spent eight years of my life on the school board, three years as a school board president of a public city school. I know this subject fairly well. I was in the Ohio Senate for six years, vice chair of education.

We all know that our school systems in this country have a severe problem. When you look at school systems like Cleveland, Youngstown, Akron, Canton, Detroit and Buffalo, we have school districts that are taking \$30,000 to \$35,000 per year to educate a child that gets a high school diploma with a fourth grade reading level.

There's a major problem in our -- in our school districts. Some of the small school districts, like my school district Leetonia, we were able to educate our kids for about \$8,000 to \$9,000 a year and produce 11th or a 12th grade reading level. So, there's a problem. I know the opposition party loves the concept of throwing more money at it. So, let's do that because that's what President Trump just did.

President Trump, on a K-12 simplified funding program, gave an extra \$2 billion to all the public school districts throughout the country. And it even gets better than that, because the Biden-Harris administration spent more than \$1 billion on DEI grants throughout the country. So, if I'm doing my math right, that's \$3.5 billion that we could take from the federal government which will never have a trickle down effect on a local school board, because I was on it for eight years.

So, whenever you hang out with the treasurer of a local public school board, they're petrified to see what's going on with the federal funding. Where is it going? And the opposition party thinks it's so romantic that the money stays here in Washington instead of ever going to the grassroots home rule effect.

So, in Ohio, we love home rule, so I'm excited to see these extra billions of dollars coming back to the local school districts. So, Madam Secretary, my question would be, now that President Trump is giving back funding to the states and more efficiently, what results do you expect that American students could produce in the next four years under the Trump administration?

LINDA MCMAHON: Well, it is -- is certainly my hope that, as we look at states being more focused and having the authority for more choice in education, that we're going to see our scores go up. But, you know, we're going to -- we have to have dedicated teachers, which I believe we do. And I think we need to take the handcuffs off our teachers so that they have the ability to be innovative in their classrooms.

I think if we look at some of the programs that have been successful in other states, as I mentioned earlier, return to the science of reading and look at how phonics has made such a difference in getting back to some of that same kind of curriculum that we used to have. I've seen it work in schools. I have visited schools where they're doing that more classical education.

So, what I would like to see, and I hope we will see and I think we will see, are state departments of education adopting more of those kinds of programs to make sure that, A, we get literacy in place, that we also have the ability to have school choice, and that states totally take this funding that is coming to them and see the areas of where they need to focus more of their dollars and direct that spending into those areas.

MICHAEL RULLI: I love those words. In particular in the state of Ohio, our speaker of the House, Matt Huffman and I did a lot of ed choice programs in the state. And this is coming from a guy -- I'm a graduate of a public school, school board member, eight years of a public school. But we created a voucher program which helps urban kids more than anything else.

When you have a Cleveland City school that is just falling to pieces, you have to give urban moms and dads the opportunity with a voucher program to put your child wherever it could be. And what that adds is actually competition within the school districts. You know, you have open enrollment, you have all these different obstacles to school board members, so it's up to them to have a good, you know, scholastics program, have a good athletic program and to be inviting to people.

I know in my old public school that I was the president of, they started a trades program within the schools. So, maybe a four year degree and \$100,000 in debt isn't what you're supposed to be. Maybe you could become a welder and make \$100,000 without debt. But we have to have different paths to get outside of the box, and I think it's an exciting time for you to be the Madam Secretary at this point.

Do you think that we can incorporate all this voucher program and this ed choice and even have better public schools, and all of it could come together? Am I wrong?

LINDA MCMAHON: I really think we do need to focus -- no, you're not wrong. And I do think we need to focus on making sure that our cultural viewpoint relative to education is not always that you have to have a four year degree, because there are other ways to have a great fulfillment, you know, of a career and provide for your families with skill based training, plumbers, electricians, HVAC, not only that, but technology developments that we're seeing.

And we ought to start that more middle schools, high schools leading into those career programs. And I think that's one of the things that our workforce development programs will show success for doing.

MICHAEL RULLI: Thank you so much, Madam Secretary. And with that, I yield my time back, Chair.

TIM WALBERG: I thank the gentleman. I recognize now the gentlelady from Michigan, Ms. Stevens.

[*]HALEY STEVENS: Great. Well, thank you, Mr. Chair. And Madam Secretary, I realize you're in the met with the president of the president. And you're the first cabinet secretary I've been able to speak with this -- this term. And if you could please pass along to the president that 55 tariff announcements in 100 days are killing us in Michigan. I know that the president came to Michigan to celebrate his first 100 days in office.

I know this is outside, technically, the purview of your administration. Um, we see hiring on hold. We see suppliers, small businesses, they are telling me today that operations are going to shut down. And certainly, we then get the question of unemployment and job training and apprenticeship programs. Now the Department of Education was passed into law in a close vote in 1979. Four years prior to that, um, the House of Representatives signed into law the, um, Investing in Disabilities Education Act, IDEA. We want to see special education fully funded in the United States of America.

And Michigan, just as of 2023, missed out on \$700 million in IDEA funding. I have worked so closely with my school districts all across my state, frankly on the missing pieces of their budget from special education funding gaps. Can you speak to some of the changes that are going on in the administration or in your very agency right now?

And if there is an opportunity for Michigan to access more special education dollars?

LINDA MCMAHON: Well, um, as I testified to earlier, you know the -- the IDEA funding is going to continue, uh, level funding going into -- into the different states. Now there are six programs that are going to be consolidated into a single stream funding that I think you could apply for in those states and help get the governor or the superintendent of education to direct more of those funds.

HALEY STEVENS: Yeah, and while I don't agree with the reckless language of shutting down the Department of Education and the dismantling and the job loss. And I know some of these individuals in Michigan who have lost their Department of Education jobs. We will gladly take every special education dollar that you can give us. And then as -- as you know, TRIO grants are grants that help low income, first generation college veteran and disabled students who we care about so much apply and successfully complete college.

And several schools in Michigan use TRIO grants to support students. So why did the administration decide to eliminate the grants program, and what's happening to that money?

LINDA MCMAHON: Well, TRIO grants for the funding that's in place now are -- are continuing for, you know, for the balance of this fiscal year. They are not -- they're not -- uh, they have been zeroed out in the next budget. What we found with TRIO and looking at -- and hey, I think and I've heard testimony, I've heard I heard a couple of senators even yesterday say that they know people that have benefited from TRIO. And I'm sure that there are many people who have and -- but there are other programs in place that would also help students who are now being benefited by TRIO. We also found out that the TRIO programs, you know, they -- they've been put through with a lot of heavy lobbying.

And the Department of Education really doesn't have the ability to go in and assess total accountability. And that's how it's written.

HALEY STEVENS: Yeah.

LINDA MCMAHON: And so --

HALEY STEVENS: Well -- well, if that's the case too, we can look at expanding Pell, which many of us, you know, support. We need to see Pell Grants expanded. We -- we obviously want to continue to that discussion with you and -- and -- and on the record. But with my remaining time and as you are a cabinet secretary for the second time in a row in -- in the administration of President Donald J. Trump, please just know we are competing with China.

We are competing on a world stage in a place where I am so privileged to call home is right in the middle of that competition. We need these engineering jobs. We need these apprenticeship programs. We -- we certainly want to see our government function to the best of its ability and deliver the standards and -- and dare I say the efficiency that our taxpayers pay into.

But when we see tax bills that are cutting investments in manufacturing, new manufacturing, 40 new plants in Michigan, when we are fighting for all the technology talent we can get, we need you to double down on this. We need your partnership. We would like to show this to you firsthand. I do a program called Manufacturing Monday.

I visit hundreds of small businesses over and over and over again. I have real relationships with these people. And the students who are in First Robotics. And yes, Michigan has the largest number of first robotics teams, which we would also love to showcase to you and your -- your -- your office. But ma'am, please tell this president slow down on what he is doing to autos, our manufacturing sector and to consumer costs.

Thank you and I yield back.

TIM WALBERG: Thank the gentlelady. I recognize the gentleman from Guam, Mr. Moylan.

JIM MOYLAN: Thank you. Mr. Chairman. Madam Secretary, thank you very much for your testimony. I'd like to bring your attention to the territories now. And as you know from Guam, like Guam, we often encounter unique challenges. We have small economics. And we have a geographical isolation. And it takes me 20 hours to fly back home door to door.

Plus you change a dateline. In fact, I think it's like 2:30 or so in the morning tomorrow in Guam. So we're way out there. We also have devastating natural disasters. We just went -- go through super typhoons. It's -- it's like a gigantic tornado happening in some of the states, but it -- it hovers over the entire island.

Plus we have the military buildup with the INDOPACOM situation. So my question is how does the administration plan to invest in American students in the outlying areas where the roles and responsibilities of the federal government are much different than that in the states?

LINDA MCMAHON: Well, what I would like to do if I'm -- if I may, you know, outside of the hearing, there are specific areas that we could talk about and how -- what my position at education may be able to be helpful for you. I'd welcome that opportunity to have a more thorough discussion with you.

JIM MOYLAN: I appreciate that. And we need to get you to Guam as well. That would be great. Uh, going on to another question then, again, specifically on Guam. We often fail to recruit and retain special education specialists. I understand that's nationwide but making it burdensome for our special needs students to attend public and charter schools.

So how can this administration support Guam in addressing these gaps?

LINDA MCMAHON: Again, that really is more local use of funding and not -- not controlled by the Department of Education.

JIM MOYLAN: When we get to our meeting, we'll also discuss how often we face financial hardships in the island. When it comes to infrastructure improvements and academic competitiveness, how does this administration plan to invest and uplift these students? Another concern of mine for the islands and many of the territories.

LINDA MCMAHON: Yeah, again, I look forward to our meeting to discuss those.

JIM MOYLAN: OK, uh, let's see. OK, just finally another one for our topics of discussion. As you're aware, Guam often struggles with the needed infrastructure upgrades. Our storms and our cost of, um, of getting materials to the island is tremendous. Um, and especially with our public schools, it's -- it's very costly.

And so how does the administration, another one we can discuss, plan to address critical issues like these, ensuring that we can make our educational institution in the outlying areas world class like all American institutions should be?

LINDA MCMAHON: Well, I really do look forward to our meeting. I think I can address things better by having -- sitting down and having a better understanding of your issues.

JIM MOYLAN: OK. Uh, likewise, when we get to our meeting, we'll talk about the shortages of medical physicians and nurses. We know nationwide, but even so more stressful for the territories. In addition, um, the -- how the skinny budget has affected our special education funding, uh, likewise for skilled trade and workers and high skilled degrees and medical professions.

How we can better that for our territories. Uh, pretty much I'm looking forward to a long discussion with you as soon as possible, Madam Secretary. Appreciate it.

LINDA MCMAHON: And I'll make myself available for that.

JIM MOYLAN: That'd be wonderful. And we'll get you a trip to Guam. Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

TIM WALBERG: I thank the gentleman. I recognize the gentleman from Texas, Mr. Casar.

GREG CASAR: Secretary McMahon, thank you for joining us here today. Right now the administration that you're a part of is pushing for a massive tax break for billionaires paid for by massive cuts to healthcare and food assistance for everyday Americans including to the children that you're charged with educating. You yourself and your family is a billionaire family of wealth of about \$3.2 billion, can you share with us, do you know how much you and your family will receive in an tax benefit if this Republican tax proposal gets pushed through?

LINDA MCMAHON: No, I've not sat down and work with my accountants on what tax but I can tell you. Most of the --

GREG CASAR: Do you have a general -- a general sense?

LINDA MCMAHON: Well, I can tell you --

GREG CASAR: Is it millions or tens of millions?

LINDA MCMAHON: The last time taxes went through I paid more.

GREG CASAR: And -- and so you think that under this proposal you will not like the other billionaires get millions or tens of millions of dollars in tax benefit?

LINDA MCMAHON: I think this is kind of a ridiculous line of questioning.

GREG CASAR: No, it's not ridiculous because here's -- here's what's important. The biggest bill being pushed by your administration for your average extremely wealthy person would give about a \$4 million benefit. Your family is worth about \$3.2 billion. So I imagine that you'd get millions of dollars in benefit from this tax bill.

Does that make sense? Does that check out?

LINDA MCMAHON: I don't know. I'd have to let you know.

GREG CASAR: Well, let's just take --

TIM WALBERG: I'd ask -- I'd ask the member how this refers to education -- policy --

GREG CASAR: Chairman -- chairman -- my question. I'll refer to that, secretary. So, OK, look, there are families watching at home from my district that could lose their healthcare. And they want to know why their healthcare would get taken away. And what it's paying for is overwhelmingly tax cuts for the wealthiest people in the country.

And so what is -- what would you spend the \$4 million on that you would get a benefit of at least \$4 million --

TIM WALBERG: Let's get to your educational line of questioning.

GREG CASAR: What would those families --

TIM WALBERG: That we deal with in this committee.

GREG CASAR: What would those families who lose their healthcare who are watching, what would you spend the \$4 million on that's worth more than their healthcare?

LINDA MCMAHON: I'm not going to address the questions relative to me personally. I'm here as the secretary of Education. And I'm happy --

GREG CASAR: OK, so as the secretary of Education then --

LINDA MCMAHON: To answer your questions relative to education.

GREG CASAR: As the secretary of Education, do you think, yes or no, that kids will be -- do better off in school if they have healthcare and their food needs met? Yes or no?

LINDA MCMAHON: Uh, we all do better. And children will do better in school if their health needs are met. I agree with that.

GREG CASAR: Good. And so I guess for those kids, which there's going to be hundreds of thousands or millions of kids that lose their healthcare, how is it, OK, that they're going to lose their healthcare so that billionaires and billionaire families, I'm not just even picking just on you, but billionaire families like your own can get a tax break?

What -- if you don't even know how many millions of dollars it is you'd get, how -- how is that worth it?

LINDA MCMAHON: I'm -- I'm not going to respond to your question.

GREG CASAR: I think the answer is because it's not worth it. It's not. If you got \$3.2 billion or \$5 billion or \$10 billion --

LINDA MCMAHON: First of all, you're going off -- you're going off the premise that there's going to be healthcare that is going to be removed from these children. I'm not sure that is a correct premise. So I'm going to --

GREG CASAR: Every single organization that's looked at this bill knows that millions of people will lose their healthcare. The latest estimate is at least 11 million people and families because you wouldn't get the enormous savings that the Republican majority on this committee is looking for unless you kick those millions of people off of their healthcare.

So how can we educate our kids if they don't have a roof over their heads, if they can't see a doctor, if they don't have food assistance? So I'll ask you, do you think it's right for kids to not have food to eat at home before they go to class in order to make sure that a billionaire that doesn't even know how many more millions of dollars they're going to get could just get a few million more?

LINDA MCMAHON: I want to make sure that as a secretary of the Department of Education that the president's plan to make school choice available to every student in our country is what we follow.

GREG CASAR: And the president's plan specifically takes money away from those kids, specifically takes food away from those families, specifically takes money and sends it to big contractors, big companies and sends millions of dollars to billionaires like you who don't even know how many millions of dollars they're going to get.

Before I was a member of Congress, I helped run an after school program at a high school where many of the kids were getting driven to school in the same car that they slept in at night. They didn't have food. Many of them couldn't see a doctor. They struggled in class. We should be passing a bill to make sure that they've got a decent classroom experience, a roof over their head, food and healthcare.

Not a bill that just funnels, who knows, in your opinion, how many millions of dollars to billionaires like those in President Trump's [Inaudible]. I yield back.

TIM WALBERG: The gentleman's time has expired. I now recognize the gentleman from Missouri, Mr. Onder.

ROBERT ONDER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And thank you, Secretary McMahon, so much for taking the time to come to testify before us today. First of all, I'd like to apologize for the contemptible way that my Democrat colleague treated you. I just want to say parenthetically that absolutely I'm a physician who has taken care of Medicaid insured patients for over 30 years and absolutely zero children will lose their healthcare under the big, beautiful reconciliation bill.

But I'd like to discuss with you, um, the some of the damage done by the Biden administration, um, to education policy in the United States. One of the worst policies, of course, was the Department of Education's, um, treatment of Title IX regulation. It, of course, radically reinterpreted sex to include gender, identity and sexual orientation, which resulted in men infiltrating women's sports much to the detriment of fairness and safety in an area where women have made enormous progress over the years.

Thankfully, a federal court vacated that regulation earlier this year. But there was another aspect of Biden's Title IX regulation that was also damaging but didn't receive as much attention. And that is the erosion of due

process during Title IX adjudication of misconduct on campus. The Biden administration uniformly lowered the evidence standard required for a student to be convicted of misconduct in such an adjudication.

This is serious. And federal courts have found that some students were wrongfully disciplined or even expelled in the process. The Trump administration has worked to -- to -- to -- to -- to improve this situation, preserving the integrity of the process for sexual misconduct victims and at the same time discouraging false accusations.

Because if false accusations are tolerated, it weakens the voice of actual victims. I believe we need a permanent legislative solution to protect victims of misconduct and -- and those accused as opposed to ping ponging back and forth with changes in administration. Um, unfortunately the Biden administration was not alone in disrespecting the Title IX due process rights over the years.

After a Title IX adjudication that occurred, um, after Oberlin College changed its schools procedures, the Sixth Circuit of the US Court of Appeals strongly reprimanded the -- the college. Noting that in this country, we determine guilt or innocence individually rather than collectively based on one's identification with some demographic group.

And concluded the institution's expulsion of a student was arguably inexplicable. Similar -- a similar case out of Purdue University where the university refused to allow the accused to see the evidence against him. Secretary McMahon, would you -- could you talk about the efforts of the department to ensure that education and educational institutions know their obligations under Title IX to protect the due process rights of the -- of their students as well as the victims of misconduct?

LINDA MCMAHON: Well, certainly I think this administration has shown that it is absolutely committed, you know, to protecting, you know, Title IX, not only with keeping men out of women's sports because we do know that women are absolutely girls and women are absolutely put at a disadvantage when men are allowed to compete.

Just simply because they can -- they can miss scholastic opportunities as well as for their own personal safety.

ROBERT ONDER: Right.

LINDA MCMAHON: So I absolutely believe that we're correct in enforcing those -- those Title IX efforts. And the president has issued an executive order to that effect as well. As well as the fact that I do believe that it is covered under Title IX, so.

ROBERT ONDER: Yeah.

LINDA MCMAHON: And the due process portion at our universities I think is very important that we continue to look at that to make sure as you said that victims and those who are accused are protected under due process.

ROBERT ONDER: No, I think that's -- I think that's correct. And I think too many times these Title IX adjudications are run by folks of -- of a -- of -- of a di bent. And many times there can be a guilty until proven innocent assumption and a lack of due process. So I thank -- I thank you and of course the Trump administration for your commitment to restoring Title IX to its original purpose as opposed to being weaponized for ideological political ends.

Thank you so much for being before us here today, Madam Secretary. I yield back.

TIM WALBERG: I thank the gentleman. I recognize now the gentlelady from Minnesota, Ms. Omar.

ILHAN OMAR: Thank you, chairman and thank you, Madam Secretary, for being here with us. Um, it is fair to assume that you are aware that when a student borrower -- loan borrower is defrauded by a school that there is a provision in law called the borrower defense?

LINDA MCMAHON: Yes, I am.

ILHAN OMAR: OK, um, it is a straightforward concept. A student should not be forced to repay loans to schools that lie to them. We know that millions of federal grants and loans, um, go out the door while students are left with education that is not worthy. So I was actually surprised a few weeks ago when your department quietly rescinded \$37 million fine that was placed against Grand Canyon University.

Can you explain why that happened?

LINDA MCMAHON: Let me think for a second. Um, let me review my notes on that because there were a couple of things I wanted to -- to make sure I covered with you. We really found that the -- the accusations against Grand Canyon, um, which is a -- a faith based organization, and we looked at all the facts of the case.

ILHAN OMAR: I am familiar with -- with this university.

LINDA MCMAHON: And my staff really --

ILHAN OMAR: My -- my question is how are those students going to be made whole if you are not allowing the university to pay the fines? What's the plan?

LINDA MCMAHON: I'm not sure that that's the right analysis of it, but I will look into it further and get back to you.

ILHAN OMAR: And you'll give me back writing -- in writing?

LINDA MCMAHON: Yes, I will.

ILHAN OMAR: OK, um, because we know that, you know, the -- the president in whom you serve, um, had a fraudulent university called Trump University. And he himself settled three lawsuits before becoming president. And we know that there are roughly 1.4 million borrowers who have been approved for borrower defense discharge and are still waiting for that process.

How are you clearing out that backlog?

LINDA MCMAHON: In terms of the borrower defense funds?

ILHAN OMAR: Um-hum.

LINDA MCMAHON: There are -- there are lists of that. I'd be happy to get back to you with those numbers.

ILHAN OMAR: OK, and while those students wait, um, can you give us a commitment that you are not going to collect that debt?

LINDA MCMAHON: Yeah, I'll have to get back to you on that as to what the situation is. And --

ILHAN OMAR: I don't understand how that's a difficult question to say, yes to. They've been defrauded. They are waiting for relief. While they wait for their relief --

LINDA MCMAHON: Well, if --

ILHAN OMAR: They shouldn't have to pay back that debt.

LINDA MCMAHON: Well, if they've been defrauded and it's been adjudicated that they've been a fraud -- that they've been defrauded, then I will get back to you as to what the time frame is and why there's a holdup if there is.

ILHAN OMAR: OK.

LINDA MCMAHON: I'm not sure as I sit here right now.

ILHAN OMAR: Wonderful. Um, there -- there was a -- I know that you've been questioned a lot on, um, IDEA and its funding. Um, my -- I -- I won't relitigate those -- those questions. I just have two particular questions to -- to -- to address or two areas to address. Um, we know that the -- IDEA that you have gotten rid of the legal team that guides the states in implementation.

How are you going to rectify that?

LINDA MCMAHON: I don't know what you mean by I have -- we've gotten rid of the legal team. Uh, we have had some reduction in force of, um, members --

ILHAN OMAR: There was a firing of the entire legal team.

LINDA MCMAHON: We have other lawyers in place at the Department of Education. And we are fully -- we are fully --

ILHAN OMAR: The entire team that was -- that was for IDEA has been fired. So how are you addressing that?

LINDA MCMAHON: Because we have other lawyers who are in place that can handle those things. And as I mentioned before, we are -- have not missed any of our statutory requirements.

ILHAN OMAR: Well, I do believe that that firing hurts the implementation. We also know that you have gutted the Office of Civil Rights, um, when there is already investigation backlog. How are you going to fix the discrimination claim cases that are out there?

LINDA MCMAHON: Well, there are -- excuse me, there are cases that we're looking into. And again, we have not missed any of our statutory requirements in terms of OCR. We also have a task force.

ILHAN OMAR: There is a backlog. There are a lot of --

LINDA MCMAHON: There is a backlog because --

ILHAN OMAR: There are a lot of kids in our schools that are waiting for relief. When you get rid of the people that are supposed to carry out those investigations, how are you to assure that those kids will not continue to be harmed? We are talking about so many situations in where kids are being discriminated against.

And you got rid of the people that investigate those investigations, so those kids can protect themselves from the -- from discrimination.

LINDA MCMAHON: Well, we still have a very strong and capable staff in OCR.

ILHAN OMAR: Then -- then you wouldn't have a backlog if that was the case.

LINDA MCMAHON: No, the --

ILHAN OMAR: There is a current backlog.

LINDA MCMAHON: Well, excuse me, --

ILHAN OMAR: And I would love for you to stop just saying words and to actually do the work that you are charged by statute. And I yield back.

TIM WALBERG: I thank the gentlelady. I recognize -- recognize now the gentleman from Pennsylvania, Mr. Thompson.

GLENN THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, Secretary McMahon, for, uh, for being here today and for your continued public service to our country. Uh, as you likely know, I co-chaired the Bipartisan Career and Technical Education Caucus for more than a decade, and I'm proud to be the champion for CT here, CTE here on the Hill alongside my good friend, Congresswoman Bonamici.

Madam Secretary, during your confirmation hearing, I was glad to hear about your commitment to providing more alternative pathways to traditional four year degrees, uh, leaning on career and technical education to help achieve that goal. Uh, as the author of the Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st

Century Act signed into law by President Trump in 2018, I'm thrilled to see the growth and the success of these programs.

Uh, typically, when I visit these programs today, I see waiting lists. Um, I see schools actually investing in bricks and mortar to expand their footprint to be able to accommodate more uh, secondary and post-secondary students. Uh, really working to restore rungs on a ladder of opportunity for so many. Today, a record nearly 12.5 million students nationwide, a number that has continued to grow since 2018 are served in career and technical education programs.

At the secondary level, students are graduating from CTE pathways at an amazing 96 percent rate, far higher than the national average. High school CTE concentrators are also more likely to be employed full time and have higher earnings eight years post graduation than their -- than their counterparts. Great pathway to success in life.

Madam Secretary, would you agree that CTE programs help incentivize workforce and skills development?

LINDA MCMAHON: Yes, I do.

GLENN THOMPSON: Yeah, you know, the reason that we obviously know this information is and contract the CTE success and made positive reforms in 2018 was because of the data. Uh, without good data, we -- it's hard to make good decisions as members of Congress. I've written about this issue to you before, but I'm still concerned about the department's decision to cancel the national evaluation of career and technical education under -- under Perkins.

Now, this five year evaluation was mandated by law in Perkins V. Um, and was set to be completed this year as Congress begins our work to reauthorize Perkins. It's time to do Perkins VI here reauthorization time. And when you reauthorize, you want to refine, you want to improve, uh, you want to maximize opportunities.

We need data to do that. Um, better to educate -- or to legislate based on data not emotion. So Madam Secretary, how does the department plan to ensure there's still a national level evaluation infrastructure in place to support evidence based policy making and CTE, while not -- not losing the nearly five years' worth of data that's already been collected?

LINDA MCMAHON: Well, we're going to continue to -- to collect the data that we need to collect. And we want to make sure that the Perkins program is as we look, I think as Congress we want to provide -- we want to provide to you the best data that is possible. So we have made some changes in some of the -- in some of the educational data collecting that we are doing.

I'm not sure as I sit here at this moment, if that's really pertinent to the Perkins data, so much as it was the NAEP scoring and other educational policies. And I'd like to get back to you after I clarify that.

GLENN THOMPSON: Yeah, that'd be great. And I look forward to working with you. Because it would cause me concern, um, that on year six of collecting that data, we use a different methodology. I mean, we need consistency, right, in terms of data. Consistency is important and statistical -- in the statistical collection of data.

So um, quite frankly, I look forward to working with you because we need to go back and finish the process the way we legislated it. And the way we did the first five years. I think it will set us up nicely for doing a great Perkins VI reauthorization. You know, additionally, the administration's FY 2026 budget proposes reprioritizing CTE grants so that they only support middle and high school students at the district level.

However, under current law, states are explicitly granted the flexibility to decide how to best split their CTE resources between secondary and post-secondary systems as post-secondary CTE programs continue to provide valuable pathways for -- for learners of all ages. And these are incredible programs that I take every opportunity to be able to visit those, to see the fruits of the legislative work that I did with President Trump, um, uh, under Trump 45. With the modernizing career and technical education for the 21st century.

Can you explain why the administration is seeking to limit CTE funds to K-12 despite Perkins law explicitly supporting student transitions beyond high school including into apprenticeship and other post-secondary pathways? Another area that I look forward to working personally with you on.

[*]LINDA MCMAHON: Thank you. I look forward to that as well. I know the president is certainly and the budget supports the directive of the president's executive order, you know, preparing Americans for high paying skilled jobs, and that's one of the things that we'd like to focus on as well.

GLENN THOMPSON: That'd be great. The action by the administration -- by the department was kind of contrary to that. Very familiar with that.

TIM WALBERG: Gentleman's time has expired. I thank the gentleman.

GLENN THOMPSON: Thank you, Secretary.

LINDA MCMAHON: Thank you.

TIM WALBERG: I now recognize the gentleman from North Carolina, Mr. Harris.

MARK HARRIS: Well, thank you, Mr. Chairman. And thank you, Madam Secretary, for being here and for your patience and endurance throughout -- throughout this hearing. There's been a lot said about the closing of the Department of Education and the activities that -- that are being ensued. But Madam Secretary, I want to ask you is education mentioned in our Constitution.

LINDA MCMAHON: I don't believe it is in terms of directives or agencies mentioned in the Constitution.

MARK HARRIS: Correct. Our 10th Amendment says that the powers not delegated to the federal government by the Constitution are reserved to who exactly?

LINDA MCMAHON: The states.

MARK HARRIS: The states and the people.

LINDA MCMAHON: Yes.

MARK HARRIS: Now my wife teaches eighth grade US history and I think even her eighth graders can piece together that if it's not mentioned in the Constitution, it must fall to the States and to the people. Sadly, some of our federal judges need to go back to the eighth grade and have that kind of class. Let me ask you this.

Do you think a single district judge should be able to stop the constitutional actions of a president?

LINDA MCMAHON: Well, I certainly think that is a question now that is before the courts and is being -- I think it will be properly adjudicated.

MARK HARRIS: Well, unfortunately, that's exactly what happened. Judge Joun in Boston issued a preliminary injunction to stop several of President Trump's education related executive orders, including the one directing you to take steps to close the department. So I want to take a moment just to set the record straight for the nation and ask you, did President Trump's executive order in March about closing the department ever tell you to ignore the law?

LINDA MCMAHON: No. In fact, it says specifically in the executive order to do it lawfully.

MARK HARRIS: Exactly. It very clearly says -- let me just quote it for the record. "The Secretary of Education shall, to the maximum extent appropriate and permitted by law, take all necessary steps to facilitate the closure of the Department of Education and return authority over education to the States and local communities while ensuring the effective and uninterrupted delivery of services, programs, and benefits on which Americans rely." It seems that Congress is the one out of line with the Constitution in establishing a Department of Education in the first place.

And I for one happen to agree 100 percent with you and President Trump that we must send education back to our states. But that process doesn't mean ignoring the laws on the books. So what steps have you taken to follow the Constitution and carry out President Trump's lawful order to move the Department of Education toward closure?

LINDA MCMAHON: Well, what I've said from the beginning, in fact, in my confirmation hearing when I was asked specifically, I said I would like to work with Congress as we look at the plans for shutting down the Department of Education and which of those agencies can carry out the -- the obligations that are currently now funneling through the Department of Education.

So it was always my goal and will continue to be my goal as I know it will take Congressional action to close the Department of Education to work with Congress to do that.

MARK HARRIS: So are there any specific needs from Congress that you have that you would ask us to help in accomplishing your task?

LINDA MCMAHON: I think they will come as we want to sit down as -- as we lay out more the plan and the timeline, you know for what -- where we think different agencies could accommodate the role right now of the Department of Education.

MARK HARRIS: OK. On another subject, Madam Secretary, do you agree that it is a privilege for foreign students to attend American universities and not a right?

LINDA MCMAHON: I do think it is a privilege.

MARK HARRIS: And do you agree that it's a privilege for universities to enroll foreign students, not a right?

LINDA MCMAHON: I think the right -- the education here in our -- I mean, I think it is a privilege for those foreign students to come and attend our universities.

MARK HARRIS: And do you agree that the safety of American students should be a top priority, especially when considering who to let on campus?

LINDA MCMAHON: Yes, I do.

MARK HARRIS: Well, recently the Department of State announced a temporary pause in interviews for student visas with plans to update the policies on screening even social media for applicants. And this comes after we've seen just the incredible rise in the violent and anti-Semitic protest on college campuses across the nation.

And I want to ask you in just a closing seconds, has your department noticed a connection between schools that fail to follow the law and report foreign donations and the prevalence of antisemitism on campuses?

LINDA MCMAHON: Well, one of the things that we've asked, in fact, this is exactly one of the issues that came up with Harvard. So we are looking at all universities now and investigating to make sure that under that section 117 they are as they are required reporting the amounts and sources of those -- those donations to the universities.

MARK HARRIS: Excellent. Well, thank you so much again for the work that you're doing. And Mr. Chairman, with that I yield back my time.

TIM WALBERG: I thank -- I thank the gentleman. And I recognize my friend, the ranking member Representative from Virginia, Mr. Scott.

BOBBY SCOTT: Thank you. And thank you, Madam Secretary, for being with us today. I have a lot of questions and hopefully I can get some quick answers and try to raise them in a way that they can get some quick answers. Do you intend to comply with the May 22nd court order?

LINDA MCMAHON: The May 22nd in which we are joined in this particular aspect, can you be more specific?

BOBBY SCOTT: The court order issued on May 22nd requiring you to, as you -- that prevented you from dismantling the department.

LINDA MCMAHON: Oh, right, that. Yes, we -- we will always comply with the law.

BOBBY SCOTT: OK, and you indicated proposals for the Department of Education going forward. Can we count on receiving those proposals as they are made? We've asked for those -- that information.

LINDA MCMAHON: Would certainly like to comply with Congress and provide you with those.

BOBBY SCOTT: Can we get a commitment from you that you will -- you will cooperate with the Office of Inspector general in the Department of Education as the law requires?

LINDA MCMAHON: Yes. As the law requires, we will.

BOBBY SCOTT: The -- on the budget under the 2026 budget, a lot of workforce development programs are combined. When the dust settles, do we understand that there will be about a 33 percent cut in workforce development programs?

LINDA MCMAHON: We are looking at workforce development and wanting to make sure that it's treated fairly. You know, right now, the United States government is paying -- well taxpayers --

BOBBY SCOTT: -- Well, what is the -- what is the --

LINDA MCMAHON: -- Are footing the bill for about 75 percent of that and and we want to reverse that. We want -- we want the businesses or the universities to pay the 75 percent and taxpayers would pay the 25 percent. So I think that's a better proposal for workforce development.

BOBBY SCOTT: Do I understand that to be a yes, it's about a 33 percent cut?

LINDA MCMAHON: I -- I will get back to you if it's different than that.

BOBBY SCOTT: In the pending reconciliation Conciliation Bill, that's the one that has tax breaks for the wealthy and cuts in health care and medicaid, CBO says at least 13 million people will lose their insurance. It's probably going to be more than that because changes were made in the bill, SNAP benefit cuts, and access to college with cuts in student loans and Pell grants.

Does the 2026 budget cut Pell and work study on top of those cuts?

LINDA MCMAHON: You know, I would really appreciate the opportunity to respond to those if they were written questions because I think we can explain them better and I can work with you on that.

BOBBY SCOTT: Title I, you said it was level funding. Do I assume that means that it was -- that it was protected? Do I assume that means it was level funded without an adjustment for inflation?

LINDA MCMAHON: For 1A.

BOBBY SCOTT: No -- no adjustment for inflation?

LINDA MCMAHON: No, It's level funded.

BOBBY SCOTT: OK. Trio, you've said publicly that there were problems with evaluating the program. Does the Department of Education now evaluates Trio programs for effectiveness?

LINDA MCMAHON: We would like to be able to look at them and have full accountability for those programs. We are precluded from doing that right now by the way that Trio is structured.

BOBBY SCOTT: Some of us believe that the department has evaluations right there in the Department of Education. Do you deny that they exist?

LINDA MCMAHON: Well, there are some evaluations that are in to get Trio going, but in terms of the longer effective Trio, there's specific language that presents -- that prevents us from doing it. So I would like to have the ability, if Trio is re-appropriated, that we would be able to change that language and go in and understand the full accountability of the programs.

BOBBY SCOTT: On student loans, will you commit to working with us? There are about 2 million students -- student loan borrowers who have applied for income driven repayment plans who are caught up in a backlog. Can we count on you to work with us to make sure they're not disadvantaged?

LINDA MCMAHON: We're working relative to all of those loans that are in default with several different programs for repayment and we urge students who have borrowed money and are in default now to go to our --

BOBBY SCOTT: -- They're -- they're in a backlog, so you work with us to make sure they're not just caught up in that? I had a Title VI question and that is that is it true that the Office of Civil Rights investigates allegations of violations of Title VI?

LINDA MCMAHON: The Office of Civil Rights at the Department of Education as -- yes, we do that.

BOBBY SCOTT: And on Title VI, are you aware of the process that requires you to, in case -- according to the law, in case of any action terminating or refusing to grant or continue assistance because of failure to comply with the requirement, the head of the federal agency must file with the committees of the House and Senate having legislative jurisdiction over the program or activity involved a full written report of the circumstances and grounds for such action, no such action shall become effective until 30 days have elapsed after the filing of such report.

Do you know if the Department of Education has filed a report with this committee on any action you've taken?

LINDA MCMAHON: We may very well have done that. I'd like to get back to you just to assure you that that's -- my answer is correct.

BOBBY SCOTT: Is --

TIM WALBERG: -- The gentleman's time has expired.

BOBBY SCOTT: Can I ask just one quick -- quick -- one more quick question? And that is, is lack of viewpoint, diversity a violation of Title VI?

TIM WALBERG: The gentleman's time has expired, and I'll ask the secretary to respond later. I now turn and recognize the long suffering ever patient gentleman from Florida, Mr. Fine.

RANDY FINE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. You can -- you can see my fidgeting here. I guess it's new guy-it is having to listen to -- to a lot of these questions. Secretary McMahon, thank you for being here. It's a privilege to be able to ask you questions. I do want to save you one follow up from the meeting. You don't have to meet with your accountant.

The incremental tax benefit to you will be zero because we're not lowering any rates. So it will be none. You will continue to pay what you have been paid. I don't know why people continue to lie about that. But -- but I want to ask you about something different. In the world that we live in today, Jews are scared.

And I speak to you not just as a Congressman, but as a father of two Jewish boys. They're 17 and they are 13 years old. I also speak to you as an alum of Harvard and I've got to go back and check the data that said in the 90s, 1 in 3 professors were conservative because I certainly didn't see him anywhere when I was there.

But -- but I will tell you as a Jewish conservative at Harvard in the 90s, despite the fact they tried to kick me out twice, I never felt unsafe as a Jewish student. Never once. Sometimes felt persecuted because of my political views, but never ever, not once in four years, six years actually, because I went there twice, did I ever feel unsafe.

But -- but students do now. And I wear this kippah now, it's a new habit of mine, at my son's request because of all the students who don't feel safe wearing theirs. And with my 17 year old -- when he was born, actually 17 years ago, I had a dream that he would follow me to where I went to school. And now we're in the next few weeks where it's time for him to start thinking about where he's going to apply to college, and I don't know that I even think he should go to college at all in the days that we live in -- in the days that we live in. So my question to you is this, given that Jews are scared, there are things that we can do on our college campuses.

And I thank you for what you you are doing. But I believe that a lot of this problem is coming from foreign influence, that our universities are taking money from -- from countries that do not share our values and do not like our politics and do not like our people. And those -- those dollars come at a price.

What they do is they don't just give a donation. They say, hey, we're going to endow a school. We're going to endow a professorship. We want you to take our students and from other countries. And what are things that we can do to work together so that countries like China or Qatar, which are clearly not looking out for the interests of Americans, that we can get that under control in our higher education system?

LINDA MCMAHON: Well, thank you for that. And I'm -- I'm glad that you felt safe because there are clearly so many students now who do not feel safe. And I have talked to them and they've told me no child going to

college or any school today should feel unsafe in the environment of -- of their education. So I regret that.

But what we are actually doing is we've launched -- we've reaffirmed the section 117 compliance from universities that they must tell us they're already required to report this, and they're not. So we're requiring them to report donors, amounts because we want to make sure there's not foreign influence, you know, with that -- with that.

The Deterrent Act is for a purpose.

RANDY FINE: What I'd like to --

LINDA MCMAHON: -- And that's really what -- that's really what we are supporting.

RANDY FINE: Well, I'd like to work with you. Because even if you look at places like Columbia, it's generally not the physics department where we see the problems. It's not generally in what I'll call real degrees. It's in this creation of what I'll call pre-Starbucks employment degrees like gender studies and these other silly things where you can't actually get a job, which are really nothing more than factories to create people to go and protest where we have these things.

And so I'd like to work with you on that. And I also want to ask you this, we subsidize these degrees. The idea that these schools walk around and say they're private really is false because they couldn't operate without the beneficiary of the United States government. So does it make sense, perhaps, for us to look at the ideas of saying if you want to get a student loan to go to the college in the United States, you've got to go get a degree in something where you actually might be able to do something useful when you're done with it?

LINDA MCMAHON: Well, I think that's one of the things when I was discussing before that I would like to see colleges and universities have more skin in the game because if they have more skin in the game, I think that they're going to make sure that the subjects and the degrees that they are offering are going to provide diplomas and pathways to employment in which they're going to -- those students are going to be able to repay their loans.

Because if they're on the hook for part of that money, they're not going to want to have to pay it if that student is not successful.

RANDY FINE: Well, I just want to close by thanking you and President Trump for what you're doing because you are fighting a fight. One of the backlogs that I didn't hear the Democrats ask about are all the investigations of anti-Semitism on college campuses, which conveniently weren't worked on when he was president.

And thank you for dealing with that backlog, but know that I'm prepared to work with you and the president on any of these issues whenever you need it. And thank you for being here today. I yield back.

LINDA MCMAHON: Thank you, Congressman.

TIM WALBERG: I thank the gentleman, and I recognize the gentleman from Indiana for the last word in questioning, Mr. Messmer.

MARK MESSMER: OK, thank you, Mr. Chairman. And thank you, Secretary, for being here. Secretary McMahon, we've heard all kinds of scare mongering from the left that you're ignoring Congress or blatantly violating the law, particularly when it comes to fraud, waste and abuse that you've eliminated in the department. I think that's simply ridiculous.

Can you reaffirm once again that your department is following the law and will continue to execute -- execute all laws passed by Congress?

LINDA MCMAHON: Yes, sir, we will.

MARK MESSMER: Thank you. Also, how will the Department balance the needs of localities to remain flexible in their CTE delivery to respond to local workforce needs while also ensuring programs are not hijacked with woke ideology by unelected bureaucrats?

LINDA MCMAHON: Well, we are continuing the funding for CTE. And that's -- I couldn't be more strongly supportive of our career technical education programs. And I want to see them started earlier in schools. Middle schools, high schools, community colleges, I think there are many pathways to opportunities for success for uniform employment.

And I think that we have to make sure that we are continuing to focus on developing those, whether it's public, private partnerships -- there are, I know, a lot of companies that work with community colleges to put funds into those community colleges to help develop curriculum. For instance, I know in West Virginia there is a program that Toyota has come in. They actually built a Toyota Center at one of the community colleges and the students who were there trained in the plant and they take part of the courses at the Toyota Center and it's a workforce built in.

MARK MESSMER: In my district as well.

LINDA MCMAHON: And so those are the kinds of things that we want to see continuing to happen.

MARK MESSMER: Thank you. And we need to maintain local flexibility because the workforce needs across the country are very diverse. So thank you for that.

LINDA MCMAHON: Yes, they are.

MARK MESSMER: Thank you. Also, the state of Indiana has been a leader in school choice programs, leading the charge and voucher initiatives and creative -- creating a comprehensive educational agenda for K through 12 education that will ensure families have the best access to educational opportunities and choices. What other steps is the department planning for returning school policy decisions back to the state and local level to help ensure states like Indiana better achieve their pro-family, pro-student education policy goals?

LINDA MCMAHON: Well, we want to make sure that -- that we're offering the opportunity, I think, for freedom -- for choice or freedom of choice in the schools. So by increasing the charter school budget, that -- one of the things that the president would like to see opportunities for more charter schools to get started.

You know, and often often charter schools, and I haven't talked about this today, are they're often started, you know, in low economic areas to provide education for those students that are kind of being left behind and aren't performing at levels that other students are. So we have this choice and competitive factors, you know, you know, in our states we are seeing the levels across all schools, a rising tide lifts all boats and it does give opportunities when -- when we have the choice that the president would like to see.

MARK MESSMER: Thank you. And in Indiana we've seen the highest utilization of charter schools in low income minority areas and benefits those students the most. So thank you. I yield back.

LINDA MCMAHON: Thank you. And I -- and I visited, not Indiana, but I have visited some of those charter schools and lower economic areas and seeing the results because it's often -- those lower economic students are often so overlooked and said, well, there's no need to waste any money there because that's where we need to spend money to make sure that they have equal opportunity as well.

MARK MESSMER: Thank you. I appreciate your support. And I yield back my time.

TIM WALBERG: I thank the gentleman. I want to thank the committee for your attention to this hearing today and I want to thank the Secretary for your diligence in being here your patience the time that was expended. It's been a long hearing and we appreciate you being here. There are no further questions, so now I recognize the ranking member for his closing remarks.

BOBBY SCOTT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and I thank the Secretary for being with us today. We're here today to consider the effect of the president's 2026 budget on programs within the jurisdiction of the Committee on Education and Workforce. And we begin that consideration while legislation passed by the House and pending in the Senate.

Showers tax breaks on the wealthy and cuts Medicaid, SNAP, and funding for programs that give access to college while adding trillions of dollars of additional debt. On top of the cuts in that bill, the 2026 proposal further cuts Pell grants, reduces work study, eliminates gear up and Trio programs, and as we consider the 2026 budget, we also consider the federal court court orders that have ordered the administration to stop dismantling the Department of Education without Congressional authority.

We have heard problems of test scores, but no plan to do anything about it, handcuffs on teachers when whatever handcuffs they may be are locally imposed, not on federal government. We've heard that there's no federal role in curriculum, teacher quality, or anything like that, and it's been emphasized that what the Department of Education responsibility is, is basically civil rights to make sure that all children have access to a quality education.

So we've heard some support for vouchers, but we know that those programs have not been shown to improve education but have been shown to increase racial segregation. And finally, Mr. Chairman, you

rescued the secretary, when I asked whether or not viewpoint diversity is a violation of Title VI. I guess we'll get that as an answer later.

But I cited the statutory requirement that if you're going to take any action under Title VI claiming anti-Semitism or any other violation of Title VI, you have to give notice to the committees of jurisdiction. Mr. Chairman I -- she indicated -- she may have given notice and if so you haven't shared that information with the Democrats on the committee.

And I would like to see that because it requires a -- before any action can be taken, you have to provide a complete report on that situation and wait at least 30 days before any action has been taken. We'll just see what the answer to -- to that is and I'll look for an answer from you. But we have a lot of work to do. We're trying to improve education and from a federal level, the cuts in education, no increase -- inflationary increase in Title I. That's a major investment we make in K through 12 cuts in Pell Grants and student loans.

That's our major investment and access to college. I think we're going in the wrong direction and hopefully we can -- when legislation is considered by the House, we can make the appropriate adjustments. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, I yield back.

TIM WALBERG: I thank the gentleman as well, and we look forward to continue working and discussing with you what's going on. And we've been -- we've been pretty busy doing that effort in the -- the One Big, Beautiful Bill and reconciliation, as you know, we've been extremely busy on that with the purpose, with the purpose of -- of making things better for the taxpayers and for the students, the universities, college, community colleges, trade schools, workforce, Pell, all of the rest for quite some time here now.

And we look forward to a more fully involving ourselves with the budget proposed by the president, and even as we started today. But I'd also state that two years while the Democrats had the full majority including White House, the House, and the Senate, the opportunities to improve education in multiple ways, even as being expressed by some of my Democrat colleagues now, it didn't happen.

And being a student of history to some degree myself looking back and seeing the impact of education in this country that produced such revolutions as agricultural revolution, industrial revolution, communications revolution, space age, all of the rest came before the Department of Education. Before. With more local control, with K-12 systems under the control of the states and local communities, school boards, parents, right now we're attempting to go that direction.

And it was disconcerting to hear some of my colleagues talk about doing away with health care, lunch programs, et cetera for students, when in fact that's not the case and our president stood very, very strong in saying that Medicaid, Medicare, school lunches were not to be cut from deserving individuals.

Waste, fraud, and abuse, yes. My -- my colleagues voted for waste fraud and abuse to be continued. But today, we're looking at what we can do to -- to get to a place where the Department of Education is at its right spot. And our gentleman colleague from North Carolina so eloquently pointed out that in our US Constitution, we don't have the responsibility for education except what we have taken outside of the Constitution.

So it will be hard constantly to experience the efforts of an administration committed to following the Constitution relative to states rights and responsibilities for education. It will also be confounding to some that better service can come from a smaller, more efficient bureaucracy. And certain states are taking education improvement into their own hands and succeeding and others will have to decide to compete as well if they will follow.

Choice. Choice. True choice in education will handle so much diversity. Bias will generally fail under its own weight. Having a light on the extent of the ingrown one sided liberal bias on our public campuses will be threatening, but change I believe will result from that. The Congressional Budget Office in relative to the Tax Cut and Jobs Act was off by 180 degrees.

They costed out a \$1.5 trillion shortfall that would result from the tax cut and Jobs Act. It was just the opposite, \$1.5 trillion to the good. And I believe what we've just done, reconciliation and the One Big, Beautiful Bill, will be a facilitator for a lot of growth and opportunity. Again, students, parents, teachers.

If we get those three component parts right, in education, we will succeed and that involves local district control as well. So, I appreciate the passionate debate that went on today, the questioning, the answers, and sometimes answers that couldn't be given because it was based on questions without -- without fact.

Thank you again for being with us. With no further business before the committee, I call it adjourned.